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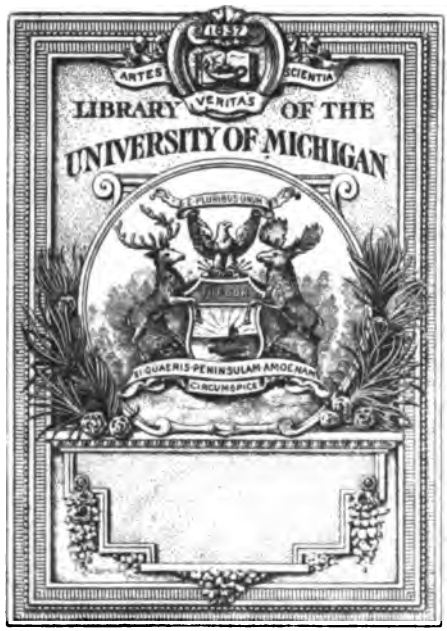
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UNCLE AND NEPHEW

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OLD FRENCH CHANSONS DE GESTE

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UNCLE AND NEPHEW

IN THE

OLD FRENCH CHANSONS DE GESTE

A STUDY IN THE SURVIVAL OF MATRIARCHY

BY

WILLIAM OLIVER FARNSWORTH, PH.D.

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NOTE

The following dissertation has been accepted by the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures of Columbia University as a valuable contribution to the history of the subject of which it treats.

HENRY ALFRED TODD.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
November, 1912

[redacted]

PREFACE

The study which follows represents the gleanings from some three hundred thousand verses of Old French poetry, comprising nearly all the published epics down through the thirteenth century. A marked feature of this reading is its corroborative nature; each poem strengthens the impression produced by the others, and the characteristics of the relations between the uncle of the epic and his nephew are so consistently depicted that one can scarcely fail to receive the impression of some elemental force at work influencing the poets' treatment of the subject. The idea that imitation alone is responsible for this remarkable consistency is speedily dispelled as one finds oneself initiated into the mysteries of early family life which have been disclosed by the researches of the sociologists and as the connection of our subject with man's primitive nature becomes apparent.

In general, where several editions of a text have been published, reference is made to the one accepted by scholars as the best, but occasional references have been made to early editions when the later one was not at hand; this does not require an apology, inasmuch as the sentiment, rather than the exact dialectical wording, is the essential consideration for our purpose. It was not easy to decide how far the citations should be standardized; the printed texts vary in many details of spelling, punctuation, and so forth, but it was thought best to retain the peculiarities of each editor, with a few exceptions calculated to render easier the part of the reader: each verse has been made to begin with a capital letter, portions spoken by the various characters have been set off by quotation marks, the useless hyphens and grave accents of the early editions have been discarded, initials standing for proper names have been replaced by the names in full, parentheses enclosing

273338

missing letters supplied by the editors have been discarded, and the most vicious specimens of incomprehensible punctuation have been modified.

It was originally intended to include all the poems designated in Langlois' *Table des Noms Propres*, hence several fitting citations are introduced from the *Naissance du Chevalier au Cygne*, which is not an epic poem; some few of the later poems were not obtainable, and it was finally decided to disregard those that showed too markedly a romantic rather than an epic tendency.

The testimony from other literatures has been gleaned largely at second hand. Although the sociological data are common property, acknowledgment has been made to the writer who discusses the points rather than to his source. An ideal way would have been to trace these points in the reports of learned societies, etc., but as the object was only to record as much evidence as possible in support of the theory here developed, the opinions of sociologists of reputation have been frankly adopted without personal verification of their sources.

Adepts in the reading of Old French will not be inconvenienced by the translations of citations; these have been placed in an unobtrusive position at the foot of the page, for the convenience of those who may take an interest in the subject but would not enjoy the deciphering of so much Old French. The translations are without pretension to literary style, and aim only to be suggestive of the wording of the original while conveying its exact sense; for that reason, and in view of the discussion in the Introduction, the word *niés* or *neveu* is rendered always by 'nephew', in cases where modern English would employ another term; these cases are very few, and the word usually does mean 'nephew'. In referring to the many characters of the poems, it was possible to employ consistently the accusative case of the name, a deviation from this rule being made in only a few instances; 'Gui', for example, being familiar to modern ears, seems preferable to 'Guion'.

In the bibliography will be found the titles in full, with the date of publication, of all works to which reference is made; in the notes these titles have been condensed as far as practicable. It was not feasible to make reference there to a syllabus of a paper to be read by title before the Modern Language Association in Chicago in December, 1911, by Professor W. W. Comfort of Cornell, on "Some Uncles and Nephews", the outline of which indicated conclusions along the line of those already being developed by the present writer.

It is hoped that the summaries of chapters in the table of contents will serve the purpose of an index, which it seemed inadvisable to make.

The topic was first suggested to the writer some years ago by Professor Raymond Weeks, who graciously furnished many notes which he had already made; to him is due also the writer's gratitude for many helpful suggestions and comments during the course of the investigation. The Romance Department at Columbia has been ever ready to supplement the information available, Dr. J. L. Gerig in particular having pointed out the path in Celtic fields. Much of this study has been read before the Seminar in Romance Philology at Columbia, conducted by Professor H. A. Todd, the indebtedness to whom cannot be fitly expressed—not only have his keen judgment and accurate scholarship been called upon and given without stint, but his sympathetic interest has gone far to make possible the completion of the work.

W. O. FARNSWORTH.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY,
May, 1913.

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Our modern conception of the family as consisting of father, mother, children, would at first thought seem to go back in an unbroken line to Roman laws, so that it is puzzling to discover that French literature of the Middle Ages, in its delineation of certain aspects of family life, shows markedly the influence of the earliest state of human society about which we have information. As a matter of fact the Old French *Chansons de Geste* show plainly that there existed in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in the form of tradition at least, a survival of an earlier condition in which the family was based upon the matriarchal principle.

Matriarchy is that stage in the development of the human family during which descent is traced through the woman's side alone. It does not presuppose nor has it anything to do with female supremacy, but is, broadly speaking, a state of society which goes back to primitive times, to a period in which the physiological principles of paternity were as yet unknown.[1] Marriage was nothing more than mating; mother and children remained at home with the mother's family, while the father lived with his own family of brothers and sisters and sister's children. Thus offspring were the exclusive possession of the woman, while her brothers were their natural guardians. Property and power were not transmitted from father to son, but from a man to his sister's son, so that the most distinguishing characteristic of mother-right, or matriarchy, is—to use the very apt term of the German sociologists—nephew-right (*Neffenrecht*).

Says Professor F. H. Giddings: "There are no means

[1] E. S. Hartland, *Primitive Paternity*, I, p. 259.

of certainly determining the character of the primitive human family. The geological record does not reveal it, and we cannot be sure that the lowest savage societies of the present day exactly reproduce all the features of primitive communities." [2] But by combining geological and biological facts and the testimony of archeological material with our observation of existing savage societies, we are able to make inferences which reveal approximately what must once have been the condition of the first human beings who formed family groups. Since in early times a man's own children were either unknown to him or neglected by him, while his sister's children occupied his affection in their stead, it is reasonable to believe that any mediaeval literature which reveals distinct and consistent traces of that state of affairs must necessarily have been under the influence of very ancient traditions; so that the prominence which the nephew in general, and the sister's son in particular, holds in the French literature of the Middle Ages is to be confidently ascribed to a legendary survival of the notion of nephew-right long after it had disappeared in fact and as an institution or a custom.

For the examination of this inviting theme the *Chansons de Geste* present an interesting and profitable field, and if we can succeed in showing a parallelism between the manifestations of the uncle-nephew relations in our mediaeval poems and those of ancient legends, of chronicle history, and of modern practises among primitive tribes, we shall establish a connection that not only brings out the human side of the *Chansons*, but also puts us closely in touch with an early stage in the evolution of family life. If, however, not all the manifestations of the matriarchal system are discovered in the *Chansons*, it will only mean that the increasing importance of the Roman view of the family had already acquired a power that left of the once prevailing nephew-right nothing more than a sentimental tradition.[3]

[2] F. H. Giddings, *Principles of Sociology*, p. 264.

[3] It is to be noted that the depreciatory sense of 'nepotism' is

Even the more or less casual reader of the Old French epic poems cannot have failed to be impressed by their constant, pervading, and almost obtrusive glorification of the relations between uncle and nephew. Although they have been touched upon incidentally by various writers, to whom reference will be made in the course of these chapters, the present study is apparently the first to investigate these relations in detail.[4] Students of Old French know also that the words *oncle* and *niés*[5] have varying meanings, so that it is necessary first of all to make an excursus into the field of linguistics in order to ascertain how far it is safe to assume that our citations will denote the same family affiliation as that indicated by the English derivatives of the French terms.

not attached to the word 'nephew-right,' which signifies a sentimental as well as a material preferment of the nephew still further distinguished from nepotism in that it is the natural development of primitive family relations, while the former word, originally euphemistic in purpose and with an ecclesiastical application, designates preferment morally unjustifiable. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says: "An euphemistic use of 'nephew' is that of the natural son of a pope, cardinal, or other ecclesiastic, and from the practise of granting preferments to such children the word 'nepotism' is used of any favoritism shown in finding positions for a man's family". The *Century Dictionary* defines 'nepotism' as: "Favoritism shown to nephews and other relatives; patronage bestowed in consideration of family relationship and not of merit. The word was invented to characterize a propensity of the popes and other high ecclesiastics in the Roman Catholic Church to aggrandize their family by exorbitant grants or favors to nephews or relatives."

[4] The dissertations of Dr. Murray Potter (*Sohrab and Rustem*) and Carl Schubert (*Der Pflegesohn*), and the article of Professor F. B. Gummere (*The Sister's Son in the English Ballads*), develop the subject at some length. The article by Professor W. A. Nitze (*The Sister's Son and the Conte del Graal*) appeared after the greater part of this essay was written.

[5] Old French *niés* (nepos), nominative; *neveu* (nepotem), accusative.

In our poems the term *niés* is applied indifferently either to the brother's or to the sister's son, while *oncle* means either father's or mother's brother, with reference to the child; these names, then, correspond to the accepted use in English of 'nephew', 'uncle'. When, as is very often the case, the poet wishes to indicate plainly descent in the female line, he is careful to characterize the nephew as *fis sa seror* ('son of his sister'); he sometimes reiterates this mode of differentiation to an extent which makes it seem almost an obsession on his part. But we find *niés* applied not seldom to persons who are also called *cosin*, and are specifically characterized as the children of two brothers or of brother and sister. In a few instances it is applied to a grandson; conversely, the grandfather is addressed as *oncles*. The question arises, is there any danger of mistaking the proper relationship in an important passage? How is the term to be taken in the many instances where the relationship is indicated only once or twice in the course of the poem?

By far the greater number of these single instances introduce Saracens or other enemies of France, and are to a certain extent unimportant, so that the possibility of confusion need not be dwelt upon here; the term is probably to be taken in its ordinary meaning of 'nephew'. Indeed, even these flitting forms are often carefully labelled, as: *Cil ert niés l'amirant et de sa sereur nés* [a] (*Fierabras*, 4065). The relationship specified as *Il estoit ses cosins et de sa seror nez* [b] (*Parise*, 664) is plain enough: the poet evidently has 'nephew' in mind, but the loose use of *cosins* satisfies him and gives the required number of syllables. On the other hand, it is not at all uncommon to find *niés* and *cosins* used without distinction; this interchange has already been discussed in a German dissertation.[c] From the evidence there adduced, Professor Jeanroy draws the conclusion that the two terms became synony-

[a] He was nephew to the Emir and born of his sister.

[b] He was his cousin, and born of his sister.

[c] J. W. Determann, *Epische Verwandtschaften*, p. 12.

mous, especially in the vocative, and that *niés* became as it were "une appellation que se donnaient indifféremment entre eux tous les membres de la geste. On sait du reste que le mot avait pris une singulière extension de sens et qu'il est, dans divers textes, réduit au rôle de simple appellation amicale."[7] It may be taken for granted, then, that this superficial confusion is nothing out of the ordinary; a few examples to supplement those of Determann will show the method of the poet.

Huon de Bordeaux meets a girl in the castle of the giant Orgileus who tells him that she is *fille le conte Guinemer, niéche Sewin, de Bordiax la cité*[a] (*Huon*, 4831). Seguin is Huon's father, so that Huon says to her correctly, *ma cousine estes* (4837), yet she calls him *biax niés* (4865). The Abbot of Cluny tells Huon that *Sewins vos peres fu mes germains cousins*,[b] then calls him *biaus niés, biax tres doux niés*, and *biax cosins*, all within the space of three hundred verses (640, 680, 685, 975). The Pope at Rome first addresses Huon twice as *biax niés*, then in giving him a sort of letter of introduction to Garin de Saint Omer he says, *Ses cousins estes et li miens, en non Dé*[c] (2501, 2563, 2566).

On reading the letter, Garin understands:

> Qu'i fu ses niés et de son parenté
> Et fu cousins l'apostole sené.[d]
> (*Huon*, 2714)

But several times he calls Huon *biax niés*, then tells his wife that Huon *mes cousins est* (2772, 2804). The hermit Geriaume also addresses Huon first as *biaus niés*, then as *cousin* (3826, 3834). The poet says that Guichart *cousins estoit Huon*

[a] Daughter to Count Guinemer, niece to Seguin, of Bordeaux, the city.

[b] Seguin, your father, was my cousin german.

[c] You are his cousin and mine, in the name of God.

[d] That he was his nephew and his kin, / And was cousin to the wise Pontiff.

[7] A. Jeanroy, "Notes sur la Légende de Vivien", *Romania*, XXVI (1897), p. 183, note.

le baceler, yet makes Guichart immediately address the latter as *biax niés* (2398, 2402). This is probably the most striking collection of citations applied to one person within a single poem.

The same looseness is seen in *Renaut de Montauban* with regard to several characters. The poet says that *Renaus en a Maugis son cousin apelé,* but in the next line makes Renaut address him as *biaus niés* (*Renaut,* p. 126, 36; also p. 97). Maugis addresses both Renaut and his brother Guichart as *cosin* (p. 98, 4, 10, 23, 35). Aalart, another brother, says:

> . . . " Cosins Maugis, ne nos contralies.
> Vos estes de ma jeste, fils mon oncle le fier,
> Et Ogiers li Danois, fils m'antain par mon cief." [a]
> (*Renaut,* p. 212, 12)

In speaking of Renaut and his brothers, Ogier himself uses both terms within a small compass:

> "Bien me doit tot li mons et blamer et hounir,
> Quant onques mes neveus a tel besoin fali,
> Mais par ice seignor ki de mor surexi,
> A mes cousins germains ne faudrai mais isi." [b]
> (*Renaut,* p. 205, 13)

The poet uses *neveu* and Ogier uses *cosin* directly afterwards (p. 194, 40). Aalart calls Ogier *neveu,* then *cousins* (p. 196, 33, p. 197, 17). Ogier refers to the four brothers as his *cousins* (p. 216, 27). Charlemagne says to Ogier:

> "Vos estes de lignage Girard de Rossillon;
> S'estes cosin Renaut, le fil au viel Aymon." [c]
> (*Renaut,* p. 146, 12)

[a] "Cousin Maugis, do not gainsay us. / You are of my family, the son of my uncle, the bold, / And Ogier the Dane is the son of my aunt, 'pon my head."

[b] "Everyone must indeed revile and shame me, / For having once failed my nephews in such need, / But by that Lord who rose from the dead, / I shall never again fail my cousins german so."

[c] "You are of the lineage of Girart de Roussillon; / And you are cousin to Renaut, the son of old Aymon."

And Maugis says to Ogier:

> "Ja fustes vos cousins Girart de Rossillon,
> Et Doon de Nantueil et duc Buef d'Aigremon." [a]
> (*Renaut*, p. 205, 12)

According to the more specific indications of the poem, Ogier is the cousin of these three, his father and theirs being sons of Doon de Mayence; Aymon is another son, so that his son Renaut and Ogier are second cousins, not *cousins germains;* Maugis is the grandson of Bovon, and is therefore the second cousin of Renaut.[s]

In the Guillaume cycle *niés* is frequently applied by one cousin to another, especially between Bertrand and Vivien: *Niés Vivïen, or vos verrai morir* [b] (*Aliscans*, 158); *Ce est Bertranz tes niés* [c] (*Cordres*, 1906); *Bertran mon neveu que j'aim de grant bonté* [d] (*Enfances Vivien*, 4749). Between Vivien and Girart, son of Bovon de Commarchis: *Ahi! Gerars, biaus niés* [e] (*Chevalerie Vivien*, 985); *Reposés vos, beas niés* [f] (949); *Niés Vivïens, ce n'est pas jeus partis* [g] (381). Guichart cries to Bertrand: *Bertran, niés, ou es tu* [h] (*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 298, variant). Guillaume says to Gaidon: *Naie, certes, biaus niés,* [i] then: *Naie, cousins, dist Guillaumes li fiers* [j] (*Moniage Guillaume*, 2274, 2287). On the other hand: *Li cuens adobat son cosin,* [k] meaning Bertrand, his brother's son (*Enfances Vi-*

[a] "You were indeed cousin to Girart de Roussillon, / And Doon de Nanteuil and Duke Bovon d'Aigremont."

[b] Nephew Vivien, now I shall see you die.

[c] He is Bertrand thy nephew.

[d] Bertrand, my nephew, whom I love with great affection.

[e] Ah! Girart, fair nephew.

[f] Rest, fair nephew.

[g] Nephew Vivien, this is not an even match.

[h] Bertrand, nephew, where art thou?

[i] Not I, surely, fair nephew.

[j] Not I, cousin, said Guillaume the bold.

[k] The Count knighted his cousin.

[s] Cf. Determann, p. 35 and table on p. 49.

vien, 3823); *Si en mena Bertran, son chier cosin*[a] (4615).[g] Bertrand is the uncle of Foucon, yet the latter sometimes calls him *cosins,* and the poet speaks of *Bertran lo palazin et dan Foucon, un suen germain cousin*[b] (*Foucon de Candie,* 620, 2971, 5943).

A few scattered examples: Doret reviles his uncle Aiquin, who has deserted him:

> "Alas, dist il, cousin desbaraté. . . .
> Ja en Bretaigne n'en auray poesté,
> Quant de mon oncle suy enxin degreppé."[c]
> (*Acquin,* 2548–2555)

Alori calls to Gillebert de Clarvent:

> Ses cousins ert, bien le tint a parent;
> "Biaus niés, dist il, pour Dieu alons nous ent."[d]
> (*Enfances Ogier,* 817)

Manuel Galopin is the (illegitimate) cousin of Garin, Begon, and Heluis; the latter says to him:

> "Diex, dist la dame, ja es tu mes cousins.
> Por Dieu, biaus niés, dont venez vous ici?"[e]
> (*Garin,* II, p. 105)

The poet states that Girart de Dijon is *Cousin le roi de France le roion,*[f] but King Louis himself exclaims: *Mors est mes niés*[g]

[a] And he led away Bertrand, his dear cousin.

[b] Bertrand the paladin and Sir Foucon, his cousin german.

[c] "Alas!" said he, "discomfited cousin." . . ./"Now in Brittany I shall have no power,/When by my uncle I am thus abandoned."

[d] His cousin was he, near kin he considered him;/"Fair nephew," said he, "for Heaven's sake let us go away from here."

[e] "Heaven," said the lady, "indeed thou art my cousin./For Heaven's sake, fair nephew, whence come you here?"

[f] Cousin to the King of France, the realm.

[g] Dead is my nephew.

[g] This is according to ms. 1448; ms. 774 reads: *son chier ami,* while the Boulogne ms. has: *Et ses cousins li palaisins Bertrant.*

(*Moniage Guillaume,* 4250, 4261). When Charlemagne hears of the havoc wrought in Rome by the pagans, he sends his nephew Gui thither:

> Et Guion de Bourgoigne a a lui apellé;
> Fils ert de sa seror et de sa parenté:
> "Cosins, vous en irres socoure la cité." [a]
> (*Destruction de Rome,* 1179)

In another poem Charlemagne says to Gui: *Vous estes mes cousins et mes parens prives* [b] (*Fierabras,* 2310). If we accept the statement of Gui that he is the *fils d'une des filles au duc Millon d'Aingler* (3406), this use of *cousin* would be incorrect, for the grandson of Milon would be the grand-nephew of the Emperor; since in the next verse Gui also calls himself the *cousin germain Rollant,* we had best consider that the poet has the genealogy confused, especially as Gui is elsewhere represented as the sister's son of the Emperor (*Gui de Bourgogne,* 216; *Destruction de Rome,* 1179); *cousin* in that sense is not so uncommon in address.[10] The Emir Galafre refers to the death of his nephew at the hands of Huon, saying:

> "I. mien cousin m'ocist ier au joster,
> Sorbrins ot nom, fix de ma seror ert." [c]
> (*Huon de Bordeaux,* 7883)

The relationship between Bovon and Milon is given as: *Il estoit ses cosins et de sa seror nez* (*Parise la Duchesse,* 664). King Louis addresses his sister's son Raoul as *Biaus niés Raoul,* then directly afterwards calls him *cousin* (*Raoul de Cambrai,* 469, 475).

In the verse *Renaus a tant en France et parens et nevous*

[a] And he called Gui de Bourgogne to him; / He was his sister's son and his kin. / "Cousin, you will go to succor the town."

[b] You are my cousin and my close kin.

[c] "He slew a cousin of mine yesterday in the tourney; / Sorbrin was his name; he was my sister's son."

[10] Cf. E. Langlois, *Table des Noms Propres.*

(*Renaut*, p. 160, 23), the interpretation must be 'cousins', according to the genealogy given by Determann.[11] There are occasional passages in which *cosins* and *niés* are used in rhetorical contrast, yet the implication is not necessarily that the poet had a clear distinction in mind:

> "Hé, Dex! ce dist li rois, com doloirox hustin!
> N'ai mais prochain parant ne nevou ne cosin;
> Tuit son mort an bataille et alé a lor fin." [a]
> (*Saisnes*, CCLXVII, 13)

When Charlemagne tries to starve out the garrison of Montauban:

> Li uns amis por l'autre vait muçant sa quisine,
> Et li fix por le pere, li niés por sa cosine.[b]
> (*Renaut*, p. 346, 20)

Guillaume leaves the battlefield at Aliscans after the death of Vivien: *O lui n'en moine ne neveu ne cosin* [c] (*Foucon*, 7). The poems do not mention any cousin of Guillaume, and we know of none, unless it be the mysterious Gautier de Termes, *qui fu neveu Aymeri lo ber* (*Mort Aymeri*, 156); Aymeri addresses Gautier as: *Biau sire niés, un petit m'entendez* (483); Guillaume calls him *Sire Gautier* in the printed edition of the poem, while the variants give *Sire cosins* (2211).[12] Léon Gautier's analysis of *Hernaut de Beaulande* says of the marriage of Hernaut and Frégonde that "le premier fils qu'ils engendrèrent fut cet Aimeri," etc.;[13] this of course does not pre-

[a] "Ah, God!" thus spoke the King; "what a grievous strife! / I have no more a close relative, neither nephew nor cousin; / All are dead in battle and gone to their end."

[b] One friend goes hiding his food from the other, / The son from the father, the nephew from his cousin.

[c] With him he takes neither nephew nor cousin.

[11] *Epische Verwandtschaften*, pp. 43, 49.

[12] Ms. Brit. Mus. Old Roy. 20, Dxi; ms. Bib. Nat. fr. 24370, anc. La Vall., 23A.

[13] *Epopées Françaises*, IV, 217; ms. de l'Arsenal, 3351, f° 33 r°.

clude the possibility of the birth of other sons whom some of the poets may have had in mind as a part of the legend, although none are specified; thus there is only slight evidence that Gautier is the nephew of Aymeri. On the other hand, Langlois concludes, after Jeanroy, that Gautier de Termes and Gautier de Blaivies are identical with Gautier le Tolosan.[14] The latter addresses Vivien as *niés* (*Chevalerie Vivien,* 1466), is connected with Guillaume and is characterized as the *fil de sa suer* (*Couronnement Louis,* 1648), yet he is not mentioned in the list of grandsons of Aymeri (*Aymeri de Narbonne,* 4626 ff.). The evidence is not very conclusive in either direction; if we accept the information of the *Mort Aymeri,* the word *neveu* is to be taken literally, and the poem is thus consistent in itself; if we adopt Jeanroy's argument, the question becomes more complicated, but then we can take the *neveu* of the *Mort Aymeri* as 'grandson', which is a not uncommon meaning in the legend of Aymeri.

Still another character whose provenience has aroused discussion is Romanz; he is the son of Garin in the *Narbonnais* (4000 ff.), his nephew in the *Enfances Vivien.* Suchier says: "Comme cette dernière chanson ne connaît pas un frère de Vivien appelé Romanz, il a représenté Romanz comme étant le fils d'une soeur de Garin, bien que dans les Nerbonois il soit son fils." Suchier finds nothing unusual in the fact that "il traite Aymeri d'oncle, et qu'il en soit appelé neveu. Faut-il rappeler ici que *oncle* peut signifier cousin?"[15]

O voit son oncle, si l'en a apelé . . .
O voit son oncle, si li dist en oiant . . .
"Je sui ses niés et ses charniex amis" . . .
"Garissiez hui mon neveu l'aduré" . . .
"Qex sera il, biax niés?" dist Aymeris.[a]
(*Narbonnais,* 4554, 4568, 4703, 4769, 5123)

[a] When he sees his uncle, he called him. . . . / When he sees his

[14] E. Langlois, *Table des Noms Propres,* and Jeanroy, in *Romania,* XXVI, p. 183, note.

[15] H. Suchier, *Les Narbonnais,* II, pp. x, lix.

It is plain here that *oncle* and *neveu* correspond to 'grandfather' and 'grandson'; in the same poem Romanz calls his father's brother Guibert both *oncle* and *cosin* (5617, 5623).[16]

This meaning of 'grandson' occurs less often elsewhere than in the Aymeri legend, and there not so often as in the sense of 'cousin'. Vivien is called the *neveu* of Naimon, who is really his maternal grandfather (*Enfances Vivien*, 3207, 3218). Vivien himself says:

> "Se ge n'abat des mellors de lor geste,
> Ans ne fui niés Aymeri ne Guillelme."[a]
> (*Chevalerie Vivien*, 1886)

This last is an interesting passage, inasmuch as *niés* means first 'grandson', then 'nephew'. Bertrand, likewise, is Aymeri's grandson, but the poet says that *Aymeris baisse dant Bertran son nevot;*[b] he asks the hand of Nubie for him: *Mes niés Bertrans te demande ta fille;*[c] he addresses him as: *Sire Bertranz, car i alez, biaus niés;*[d] and even the Saracens say:

> "C'est Aymeris qui amoine grant force,
> Ses niés Bertranz li conduit riche flote."
> (*Prise de Cordres*, 2023, 2063, 2325, 2203)[e]

uncle, he said to him audibly. . . ./"I am his nephew and his intimate friend." . . ./"Protect today my nephew, the practised warrior." . . ./"What can it be, fair nephew," said Aymeri.

[a] "If I do not hew down some of the best of their race, / Never was I 'nephew' of Aymeri nor of Guillaume."

[b] Aymeri kisses Lord Bertrand his nephew.

[c] My nephew Bertrand asks thy daughter of thee.

[d] Sir Bertrand, pray go thither, fair nephew.

[e] "It is Aymeri who is bringing a great force, / His nephew Bertrand is leading a powerful troop for him."

[16] Suchier's edition of the *Narbonnais*, Vol. I, p. 149, note, inserts an additional laisse found in mss. Brit. Mus., royal 20 D XI, and Bib. Nat. fr. 24369, dating from about 1300, half a century later than the mss. utilized above, in which it is said that

> Romans i fu qui ot le cuer uaillant,
> Filz de la fille Ay' le sachant.

Cf. Vol. II, p. iii.

We read of *Kallos li niés Pepin* (*Chevalerie Ogier*, 2934), and of *Charlos, li niés Pepin, li fiex Charlon, le roi o le cuer fier*[a] (*Enfances Ogier*, 5940). Charlemagne says to Huon, Chatelain de Saint Omer, referring to his daughter's son by Ogier:

> "Hue, ne vous chaut d'esmayer,
> Car je ferai vo neveu chevalier,
> Se en aage vient k'armes puist baillier."[b]
> (*Enfances Ogier*, 7911)

Determann makes Aalais the daughter of Loeys in *Raoul de Cambrai*, thus assuming that *neveu* applied to Raoul means 'grandson';[17] but Aalais is distinctly stated to be the sister of the King, so that *neveu* is to be taken in its ordinary meaning:

> "Di ma seror o le simple visaige" . . .
> "Li miens chiers freres qi France a a garder" . . .
> "Fix ert vo suer, qe de fit le seit on" . . .[c]
> (*Raoul de Cambrai*, 142, 3561, 4869)
> Icil Raous Seignor, que je vos di,
> De la seror fu le roi Loëiz.[d]
> (*Mort Garin*, 3698)

The term *neveu* is used also to indicate grandchildren in general:

> Et Aimeris et tot si .vi. enfant,
> Et si neveu et si apartenant.[e]
> (*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 5972)

[a] Charlot, the 'nephew' of Pepin, the son of Charles, the stout-hearted king.

[b] "Huon, you must not be uneasy, / For I will make your nephew a knight, / If he comes to the age when he can bear arms."

[c] "Tell my sister with the open countenance." . . . / "My dear brother who has France in his keeping." . . . / "He was your sister's son, for it is known with certainty."

[d] This Raoul, my lords, as I tell you, / Was from the sister of King Louis.

[e] And Aymeri and all his six children, / And his 'nephews' and his near relatives.

[17] *Epische Verwandtschaften*, p. 24.

Quens Aymeris a toz ses filz mandez,
Et ses neveuz et son riche barné.[a]
(*Mort Aymeri*, 552)
Mès il manda de ses autres amis,
De ses neveuz la ou il les sot vis,
Qu'il viegnent a Nerbone.[b]
(*Mort Aymeri*, 549)

There are two instances of this in the much later *Naissance du Chevalier au Cygne* which it may not be inappropriate to cite here, although the poem is not a *Chanson de Geste;* in the first, the mother of the king speaks, in the second it is Lotaire himself, who addresses his sons after they have been changed back into human form:

"Fiux, jo t'ainc autretant com moi, mien escient,
Et qui tu ameras, amerai le ensement;
Se j'ai de toi neveu, joie et devinement
Avra tos jors de moi, et esbanoiement."[c]
(*Elioxe*, 740)
"Et jou marierai ma fille hautement,
Soit a roi u a prince u duc u amirant;
Si arai des nevels, s'ierent mi bien aidant."[d]
(*Elioxe*, 2979)

This appears to be a long list of cases in which *oncles, niés* and *cosins* are confused, but the confusion is only apparent, and nearly always the precise relationship can be plainly made

[a] Count Aymeri has summoned all his sons, / And his 'nephews' and his powerful barons.

[b] But he summoned his other friends, / His 'nephews' wherever he knew them to be alive, / That they come to Narbonne.

[c] "Son, I love thee as much as myself, I am sure, / And whom thou shalt love, I shall likewise; / If I have 'nephews' by thee, joy and good omen / Will always be with me, and delight."

[d] "And I shall marry off my daughter nobly, / Either to a king or prince or emir; / And I shall have 'nephews', and they will be my faithful helpers."

out. It is evident that *niés* has a connotation of close and affectionate relations, and that the poets frequently apply the term in intercourse between cousins, particularly in address, when an expression of endearment is desired; by extension, it becomes a term of flattery much as does the word *amis* or *freres*.[18] The study of the French epic shows how natural it is that it should have become a term of endearment. Josiane, daughter of Bradmund, desires to send a messenger to her lover; she calls a man, addressing him as: *Beau frere, dist ele, vus feres ma volunté*[a] (*Boeve de Haumtone*, 725); similarly Guillaume addresses his nephew Alelme as *frere*, his niece Aaliz as *Bele suer, douce amie, ma bele niece*, and his wife as *Dame Guïbor, douce suer, bele amie* (*Couronnement Louis*, 1790, *Aliscans*, 3177, 467, ed. Jonckbloet).[19] Baudus, fighting with his cousin Renoart and trying to moderate his fanaticism, calls him *Rainouars, frere*, and then explains: *Mes cousins est, car de m'antain fu nes*[b] (*Aliscans*, ed Halle, 7275). The meaning 'grandson', which is less common, seems to go back to an earlier use of *niés*, when it had not acquired a settled meaning, but was still affected by the original meaning of the Latin *nepotem*.[20] An example cited by Godefroy bears this out: "Cil qui nait de moi et de ma feme est en mon poer, et cil qui nest de mon fil et de sa feme est mis nies et ma niece,

[a] "Fair brother," said she, "you will do my will."

[b] "He is my cousin, for he was born of my aunt."

[18] Cf. W. A. Stowell, *Old-French Titles of Respect*, Chapters I and XIII.

[19] The verse of the Halle edition corresponding to this last citation, 452 a, reads *dous cuer et douce amie*, and the editor remarks that "die Lesart *suer* giebt, auf Guiborc bezogen, keinen genügenden Sinn." As a matter of fact, it is a very common term of endearment applied to the wife, occurring particularly often in the *Willame;* furthermore, the majority of the mss. have *suer* in this verse.

[20] Cf. pages 18 and 19 for a tabulated arrangement of the Teutonic and Romance equivalents.

et lor enfanz sunt en mon poer."[21] The word is also found occasionally in the sense of near relatives as well: *A cest malvais failli roi neveu sommes,*[a] says Guillaume, objurgating Louis for not sending aid to Vivien (*Enfances Vivien,* 3224).[22]

That these are not to be taken as serious discrepancies is attested by the older use of the words in English. It has been pointed out that 'cousin', 'coz', in the English ballads, probably mean 'nephew'.[23] Shakspere, mentioning his granddaughter Susannah in his will, calls her his 'niece'. Murray's New English Dictionary states that 'nephew', with the meaning of 'grandson', now obsolete, was common in the seventeenth century, and gives examples from the year 1287 on.[24] Murray also cites an instance in Shakspere of the use of 'nephew' for 'cousin':

> Henry the Fourth, grandfather to this king,
> Deposed his nephew Richard, Edward's son,
> The first begotten, and the lawful heir
> Of Edward king, the third of that descent.
> (*Henry the Sixth,* Part I, Act II, Scene 5, 64)

The archeologist Bachofen draws the conclusion that "der ältere deutsche und englische Gebrauch ruht auf dem Einfluss des römischen," which would be equally true of the Romance use.[25] Bachofen's explanation is interesting, because he sees in the use of the terms for nephew and grandson an illustration of the change from maternal to paternal descent: *nepos* was originally 'sister's son' among the ancient Etruscans, but

[a] We are 'nephews' of that wretched, cowardly king.

[21] *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien Français, niés,* citing *Liv. de jost. et de plet,* I, 9 § 2, Repetti.

[22] Cf. Determann, p. 11.

[23] Gummere, *The Sister's Son,* p. 141.

[24] In this connection, it may not be amiss to remark that the voiced sound of *v* in the word, which is historically the correct one, is still heard in England.

[25] J. J. Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe,* II, p. 122.

Rome changed the *nepos ex sorore* into the *nepos ex filio vel filia*, because the grandson continued the family, just as originally the sister's son had done; he gives examples in classical and mediaeval Latin of what he thinks the earlier use.[26]

Schrader, however, goes farther back and more deeply into the matter, showing conclusively the uniformity of formation and the stability of meaning of names for the closest kin in the Indo-European family in early times, names for father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter; but as regards uncle, nephew, grandparents, etc., "there is no uniformity in the formation of their names, and the meanings of these names of kin seem to have been in a continual state of flux."[27] He gives examples to show that "the European languages very frequently form the name of the mother's brother from a stem which also designates the grandfather or grandmother." So the Latin *avus*, whence *avunculus* > *oncle*. Diez had already remarked that in the Lex Salica *avunculus* is used for *patruus*;[28] the latter word is lost in the Romance languages, and the extension of meaning given to the former is a natural one in a stage of family life which begins to see no difference between the functions of the mother's and those of the father's brother. The confusion between the meanings 'grandfather' and 'uncle' seems to have its origin in the general development of the *avo*-stem, which originally meant 'forefather' in general.[29] There is a parallel in the derivatives of the stem **nepot-*, and Schrader expresses the opinion that "when in certain European languages derivatives from *avo*- came to be applied to the mother's

[26] *Antiquarische Briefe*, II, pp. 113, 117, 119.

[27] O. Schrader, *Prehistoric Antiquities*, trans. by Jevons, p. 369 ff.

[28] *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*.

[29] *Prehistoric Antiquities*, p. 379. Cf. the Cymric *ewythyr*, 'uncle', 'great-uncle' (paternal or maternal); Cornish *eviter* > *ewiter*; Breton *éontr* ('maternal uncle') < Celtic **awon-tro*, no other near equivalent but Latin *avun-culu-s*, perhaps '*petit aïeul*', caressing term for maternal uncle (*fils de l'aïeul maternel*).

brother, the stem * *nepot-* took the same direction, and was used to express relation to the mother's brother and the mother's sister." [30] The many citations from the Old French epic made in the early part of this chapter show a relation to the development in the Teutonic languages as tabulated by Dr. Schrader.[31]

With regard to the diversity of usage in the Romance field, the following conclusion is reached by Dr. Ernst Tappolet so far as the popular speech is concerned:

"Das Lateinische hat in seinem doppelsinnigen NEPOS eine 'verhängnissvolle' Erbschaft hinterlassen. Die hiberischen Idiome allein haben die lateinische Hauptbedeutung—mit Anschluss und Ersatz der andern—beibehalten. Das gallische Sprachgebeit hat die Zweideutigkeit auf die Länge nicht ertrangen und durch die ihm eigene adjectivische Zusammen-

[30] *Prehistoric Antiquities*, p. 379.

[31] *Prehistoric Antiquities*, p. 374.

Sanscrit: *nápât, náptar* = 'descendant' in general, later 'grandson'.

Iranian languages: Zend *napât* = 'grandson'; Greek *νέποδες* = 'brood', with derivatives meaning 'child of brother or sister'; Latin *nepot-* = 'grandson', then later 'nephew'.

Teutonic languages: Anglo-Saxon *nefa* = 'grandson, nephew'; Old Norse *nefe* = 'kinsman'; Old High German *nefo*, Middle High German *neve* = 'sister's son', rarely 'brother's son', also 'uncle', then 'kinsman' in general (Kluge); Old Norse *nipt* = 'sister's daughter, niece'; Old High German *nift*, Middle High German *niftel*, Gothic *nithjis* = 'cousin'; Old Norse *nithr* = 'descendant'.

Old Slavonic: *netiji* = 'nephew'.

Old Irish: *nia* = 'sister's son'.

The same material may be found in Kluge's *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, from which Schrader draws. In the seventh (1910) edition, Kluge adds that "Luther gebraucht Neffe als 'Enkel'; die heutige Bedeutung galt zur Zeit Frisch (1741) nur in vornehmen Kreisen und erst am Schluss des 18 Jahrhunderts ist das Wort mit der heutigen Bedeutung schriftsprachlich geworden." (See word *Neffe*.)

setzung bei Verwandtschaftsbegriffen den dringend nötigen Ersatz geschaffen. Das Ital. und Rum. stehen ihm darin weit zurück und leiden immer noch an der traditionellen Zweideutigkeit." [32]

He systematizes the situation in a diagram showing that the meaning 'grandson' is found in Spanish, Portuguese, Old French, Roumanian, Albanian, and that of 'nephew' in Old French, Modern French, Rhaeto-Romance, Roumanian, Italian, Albanian; he questions whether the earlier meaning of the Latin original remains in the spoken language of Italy, and adds: "In der Toscana mag es noch gelegentlich der Fall sein unter dem Einfluss der offiziellen Sprache; aber in der Volkssprache des Nordens und Südens lebt NEPOS = Enkel nicht mehr und so ist Italien thatsächlich dem jetzigen Zustand in Frankreich nicht mehr gar zu fern." [33] He cites the following derivatives in the sense of 'nephew': Nepos > altit. *nievo;* altvenez. *nievo, nevo;* prov. *nep-s;* altfranco-prov. *nes* (*nevou*); altfranz. *nies* (*neveu*); rhae.-rom. *nefs;* alban. *nip.* Nepotem > ital., sard. *nipote;* Oberitalien, Südfrankreich, Balearen, franco-prov., rum. *nepote;* mittel- und nordfranz. *neveu.*

It is unnecessary to go further into this linguistic problem: Kluge and Schrader make plain the development of the stock from 'descendant' and 'grandson' to the Latin use of 'grandson', later 'nephew', and the Teutonic use of 'grandson, sister's son, nephew', while Tappolet shows that in the Romance field the double meaning exists only in Old French, Roumanian and Albanian, the Spanish and Portuguese adopting the meaning 'grandson', the French and Italian that of 'nephew'.[34] Its importance for present purposes is that the

[32] E. Tappolet, *Romanische Verwandtschaftsnamen,* p. 91.

[33] *Id.,* pp. 86, 87. It is a question whether his statement may not be a little too sweeping, although based on observation of the spoken language.

[34] The terms *oncle à la mode de Bretagne,* 'cousin of one or the other parent', and *neveu à la mode de Bretagne,* 'son of a cousin', undoubtedly have some connection with this development, just what has not yet been made clear.

very terms *oncle, niés,* as used in the French epic of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, call up a discussion of relationship in an earlier state of society; it is not to be wondered at, then, that the relations between uncle and nephew as portrayed in the *Chansons de Geste* should contain many elements dating from primitive times. Whatever the superficial confusion in the application of terms may be, each poem is practically consistent in itself as regards the actual family relationship.[35]

[35] That the terms under discussion are not always employed with precision even today is shown by the recent play of *Un Bon Petit Diable,* by Mme. Edmond Rostand and her son Maurice, in which, throughout the play, Charle calls Mme. Mac'Miche, his guardian's wife, *ma cousine,* while she calls him *mon neveu.*

[35a] The poem of *Bueves de Commarchis,* a copy of which was not available at the time the foregoing chapter was written, contains an important example of the double sense of *niés.* In vs. 59, Gerart and Guielin are said to be *neveus* of Aymeri, and in vs. 69 they are *neveus* of Guillaume. Aymeri is their grandfather, Guillaume is their uncle; cf. vss. 2547, 2676.

CHAPTER I

Attitude of Father Compared with that of Uncle

In order to connect the primitive elements in the *Chansons de Geste* with that state of society called Mother-right, it is necessary first to make an exhaustive study of the poems for the purpose of ascertaining the exact position of the nephew with regard to the uncle, the attributes or conventional qualities attached to the latter, and the rights and claims of the one upon the other. As will be seen, the tendency is to minimize the intimacy between father and son, while exalting that between uncle and nephew; in the latter case the closest solidarity is the almost invariable rule, while for the most part the attitude of the father, when the poet goes into the subject at all, is one of severity and injustice, breeding dissension and disruption of the family relations.

For example, in *Doon de Mayence,* when Doon's father is about to send the boy off to his uncle for training, after a long tirade filled with good advice, he raises his hand and strikes his son; this is by no means the 'accolade' which accompanies the knighting of a youth, but a furious blow, particularly unjustifiable in the case of Doon, who has for eight years taken the tenderest care of his blind father; yet the poet does not speak of the blow as anything extraordinary:

> Lors le fiert de la paulme sur le viz, qu'il ot gras;
> Puis luy a dit: "Beaul fiz, bellement et par gas
> Pour ce t'ay je feru que ja ne l'oubliras." [a]
> (*Doon de Mayence,* 2478)

[a] Then he strikes him with his palm upon his face, which was plump. / Then he said to him: "Fair son, gently and in jest / Did I strike you, so that you will not forget it."

In the *Narbonnais,* we find the father Aymeri equally brutal towards his sons; he keeps the youngest at home, sending off the others to make their way in the world, and when his wife ventures to oppose his harshness, he strikes her to the ground. In the end he succeeds (in this poem) only in embittering his sons against him. His intentions are doubtless good, but this display of the iron hand is a characteristic of the epic father which makes the benevolence of the uncle all the more noticeable by contrast:

> "Esploitiez vos, que ne vos targiez mie,
> Si issiez tost de ma cité garnie!
> Que, par celui qui tot a en baillie,
> Se vos i truis demain dedanz complie,
> N'an manroiz arme ne destrier de Sulie,
> Si samblera hontage." [a]
> (*Narbonnais,* 296)

In *Guibert d'Andrenas,* which is as yet inedited, Aymeri decides to bequeath his lands to a godson and to disinherit the youngest son, Guibert; the latter rebels, exclaiming:

> "Non ferez, pere! par Dieu lo fil Marie!
> Deseriter me volez par folie,
> S'estranges hon a ma terre sesie." [b]

Upon his refusal to retract this unfilial speech, Aymeri flies into a passion and calls him *glos, lechiere, fil a garçon, mauvais couart proves,*[c] and the browbeaten son submits.[36] In *Elie de*

[a] "Hasten, do not delay at all, / And quickly leave my rich city! / For, by Him who has all in his power, / If I find you here tomorrow by the end of complines, / You shall not take away arms nor steed of Syria, / And it will seem a shame.

[b] "You shall not do it, father! By God the son of Mary! / You wish to disinherit me through madness, / If a stranger is possessed of my inheritance."

[c] Rake, dog, low-born son, vile proven coward.

[36] Ms. Brit. Mus., Bib. Reg., 20 B XIX, fol. 152 r°. The citations from *Guibert* were obtained through the courtesy of Professor Weeks, who possesses copies of all the mss. of the poem.

Saint Gille, Julien despatches his son under much the same circumstances; his intentions, too, are good, for he is endeavoring to arouse the rather sluggish Elie to a life of activity, but he cuts him off from his inheritance, and on driving him forth he gives him such a blow that the maddened boy can stand it no longer. Elie flees, and after distinguishing himself at a tournament refuses to become reconciled to his now admiring parent:

Li vieus li çaint l'espee a son senestre lés:
Il a hauciet le paume, se li done .i. cop tel
Por .i. poi ne l'abat et nel fist enverser.
Et quant le voit li enfes, le sens quida derver;
Il dist entre ses dens coiement a chelé:
"Dan vieus, mout estes faus et gangars et enflés!
Se l'eust fait .i. autre, ja l'eust comperé;
Mais vous estes mes peres, ne m'en doi airer."[a]
(*Elie,* 104; cf. 35–165)[87]

[a] The old man girds the sword upon his left side; / He raised his palm, and gives him such a blow / It almost fells him and made him fall backwards. / And when the youth sees this, he almost went mad. / He muttered to himself quietly and secretly, / "My lord, old man, you are false and churlish and proud. / If another had done it, he would surely have paid for it! / But you are my father, I must not become angry."

[87] This passage, as well as the one just cited from *Doon de Mayence,* is a rather far-fetched illustration used by A. Schultz (*Das Höfische Leben,* I, p. 185) as an example of the *colée* given when a youth was *adoubé;* "es ist also der Ritterschlag im Grunde nur eine symbolische Handlung, dem Knappen die Erinnerung an die guten bei dieser Gelegenheit erhaltenen Lehren noch mehr einzuprägen." The symbolical interpretation is undoubtedly correct, yet the manner of application in the case of Doon and in that of Elie suggests anything but kindly intentions on the part of the parent, as is evinced by the anger of Elie when he receives the violent blow. Gautier (*La Chevalerie,* p. 325) represents the father as being always unnecessarily brutal in this feature of the ceremony, but states that the *colée* was of eleventh century origin,

In *Floovant*, the anger of Clovis at his son, who has humiliated the seneschal by cutting off his beard while the latter was sleeping, is so great that he sentences him to exile for seven years. Floovant, furious at such unnecessary harshness for a mad prank, steals away without taking leave even of his mother, *qui plus le tenoit chier que elle ne façoit son seignor droiturier* [a] (156). In the *Couronnement Louis*, Charlemagne seems to regard Louis more in the light of a political successor than as a son who has a claim upon his fatherly affection. At the coronation he has no patience with the shyness of the boy, who knows not how to act, but reviles him and finally decides to make a monk of him. To be sure, the Emperor does show a spark of kindliness when Guillaume succeeds in placing the crown upon the boy's head: *Voit l'empereres, de son enfant fu liez* [b] (149).[88]

That parental authority was enforced by blows on slight provocation is evident. In *Aiol*, Elie falls into a rage with his son, who has heaped benefits upon him, merely for pretending as a jest that his father's old war-horse is dead; the father takes a stick and starts to beat Aiol, calling him *faus lechieres, fol glous desmesurés* [c] (*Aiol*, 8272). When Bertrand, in the *Enfances Vivien*, chafes with eagerness to take part in the battle, his father Bernart strikes him and roughly tells him: *Tais toi, lichieres orguillox, fui desi* [d] (3585), while his uncle

[a] Who held him dearer than she did her rightful lord.

[b] The Emperor sees, and rejoiced in his son.

[c] False rake, mad, arrogant glutton.

[d] Be silent, proud rake, make haste from here.

and not an essential feature of the *adoubement* (pp. 270, 286; cf. Guilhermoz, *Origine de la Noblesse*, p. 413). It is significant that our texts, while treating the incident in a broadly humorous way in the case of the father, are non-committal as to the *colée* given by the uncle.

[88] The reading of the E. Langlois edition (vs. 147) is preferable: *Veit le li pere.* In *Huon de Bordeaux* (85 ff.), Charlemagne publicly denounces his son Charlot, giving a long category of his defects and errors.

Guillaume good-naturedly puts him off with a laugh, saying he is much too young:

> Ot lou Guillaumes s'an a gete .i. ris;
> "Bien sire nies atendes un petit,
> Si m'eïst Dex vos estes trop petis." [a]
> (*Enfances Vivien*, 3572)

This same Bernart, in the *Charroi de Nîmes*, urging his unwilling son to accompany him on the Saracen expedition, loses his temper and: *Hauce la paume, si li a doné grant* [b] (615). Sometimes the tables are turned and the son assumes the defensive, as is seen in the attitude of Antiaume, who has been befriended by Aiol, towards his father Rainier, who shelters Aiol over night and then treacherously attempts to kill him; his son threatens:

> "Se ne fussiés mes peres, ja presisse loier
> De vo grant traison a l'espee d'achier." [c]
> (*Aiol*, 7656)

This is an exceptional case, however; the son never strikes the father, and his attitude is generally one of complete submission. In the unpublished manuscript of the *Siège de Barbastre* there is a case of unnecessary brutality on the part of the father: Bovon is berating his son Gerart and lauding his own prowess; when Gerart tries to excuse himself, the father seizes a stick and is about to beat Gerart, but is prevented by the others present.[39]

There are numerous examples of the slight value set upon the son by the father: in *Huon de Bordeaux*, Charlemagne conceives a great liking for Huon, a recent arrival at court, and when the latter tells him that he has killed an unknown man,

[a] Guillaume heard him and uttered a laugh; / "Fair nephew, wait a little; / So may God help me, you are too little."

[b] Raises his palm, and gave him a good one.

[c] "If you were not my father, I would indeed take toll / For your great treachery with my sword of steel."

[39] Ms. 1448, fonds fr., fol. 124 v°.

the Emperor grants him his protection even if the victim proves to be his own son:

"Et, foi que doi al vrai cors saint Vinçant,
Se vous m'aviés ochis .i. mien enfant,
Karlot mon fil, que je paraime tant,
N'ariiés garde de ce jour en avant,
Se traïssons ne vous va encoupant." [a]
(*Huon de Bordeaux,* 1208)

In *Berte aus grans pies,* Symon has opened his home to the friendless Berte, and becomes so attached to her that he calls her his niece and swears that he loves her more than his own daughters: *Plus l'aim que mes enfans, si soit m'ame sauvée* [b] (*Berte,* 2788). In *Anseïs de Cartage,* Gui nearly kills the Saracen Aridafle, whereupon his son, who has come over to the French, expresses his indifference and announces his intentions of sparing no relative (7251). This attitude of murderous fanaticism on the part of the converted Saracens must appeal particularly to the poets, so often do they introduce the idea; in *Aliscans* there is an elaborate account of the combat between Desramé and his son Renoart, who is christianized. The son insults his father's religion, they bandy words, then each tries to kill the other, and each escapes by a mere accident (ed. Halle, 6597). In *Raoul de Cambrai,* Guerri loses two sons in battle, but during a truce utterly neglects to seek their dead bodies, so intent is he on finding that of his nephew Raoul, who was killed at the same time (3226, 3582).[40]

Sons are frequently represented in the epic as being offered by the father as hostages, even when death is absolutely certain for them. In the *Chanson de Roland,* Blancandrin sug-

[a] "And by the faith that I owe to the true body of Saint Vincent, / If you had slain a child of mine, / Charlot my son, whom I love so very much, / You should have no care from this day on, / Unless treachery accuses you."

[b] I love her more than my children, so may my soul be saved.

[40] For citation, see page 42.

gests to the pagan king Marsile that Charlemagne can be induced to leave Spain by sending to him ten or twenty of their sons and by promising to follow him to France and become converted; when the time has passed, the Emperor will be angry at their breach of promise and will kill the hostages. The pagans agree to this, and it is announced to the emperor, who is not in the least horrified when Marsile offers his own son *par num d'ocire:*

"S'en vuelt ostages, e vus l'en enveiez.
O dis o vint pur lui afiancier.
Enveiums i les filz de noz muilliers;
Par num d'ocire enveierai le mien.
Assez est mielz qu'il i perdent les chiefs,
Que nus perdium l'honur ne la deintet,
Ne nus seium cunduit a mendeier."
Paien respundent: "Bien fait a otreier" . . .

"Viendrat li jurz, si passerat li termes,
N'orrat de nus paroles ne nuveles.
Li Reis est fiers, e sis curages pesmes:
De noz ostages ferat trenchier les testes;
Asez est mielz que la vie il i perdent
Que nus perdium clere Espaigne la bele
Ne nus aium les mals ne les suffraites."
Dient paien: "Issi poet il bien estre."[a]
(*Roland*, 40 ff.)

[a] "If he wishes hostages, do you send him some. / Ten or twenty, to give him confidence. / Let us send him the sons of our wives; / Even were he to be put to death, I will send mine. / Much better is it for them to lose their heads / Than for us to lose our lands and our estates, / And be reduced to begging." / The pagans reply: "It is well to grant this." . . . / "The day will come, the limit will pass, / He will not hear word or news of us; / The King is haughty, and his heart is implacable; / He will have the heads of our hostages cut off; / Better is it that they shall lose their lives, / Than that we shall lose bright Spain, the beautiful, / And have woe and suffering." / The pagans say: "This can well be so."

"De cez paroles que vus avez ci dit
En quel mesure en purrai estre fiz?"
"Par bons ostages, ço dist li Sarrazins,
Dunt vus avrez o dis o quinze o vint.
Par num d'ocire i metrai un mien filz.
E n'en avrez, ço quid, de plus gentilz."[a]
(*Roland*, 145)

In the *Couronnement Louis*, King Galafre offers his sons in the same way, even urging that they be hanged if the terms of the agreement are not carried out:

"Et se c'est chose que de covent vos faille,
Endui mes filz recevez en ostage,
Que réançon un denier ne lor vaille,
Ainz les pendez amedeus a un arbre."[b]
(*Couronnement Louis*, 479)

There is no indication that the poet tries either to please or to shock his hearers by attributing such inhumanity to the Saracens, for the offer of sons is accepted each time as a matter of course, and the same peculiar attitude is assigned to the French as well. In the *Enfances Ogier*, Gaufroi sends his son to the Emperor as hostage; to be sure, there is no danger of death specified, and the father does show a little emotion at parting with the child:

Toutes ces choses volentiers otroia,
Ogier son fill en ostage livra,
Mais au livrer un petit lermoia.[c]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 218)

[a] "These words that you have spoken here, / To what extent can I be assured of them?" / "By good hostages," said the Saracen, / "Of whom you shall have ten or fifteen or twenty. / At the risk of his being put to death, I will add a son of mine. / And you will not have, I think, any more noble."

[b] "And if there is anything lacking in the agreement, / Receive both my sons as hostages; / Let not ransom avail them a farthing, / But rather hang them both to a tree."

[c] All these things he granted willingly; / Ogier his son he delivered as hostage, / But on giving him up he wept a little.

In *Renaut de Montauban,* it is astonishing to see with what ease the Emperor is persuaded to send his son Lohier as messenger to Bovon d'Aigremont, on a mission all the more dangerous as the implacable Duke has already killed the first envoy; the poet does, indeed, represent Charlemagne as having the grace to hesitate, but after all the sentiment is perfunctory, and the lament which the father utters when he learns of Lohier's death lacks the genuineness of the emotion to which the uncle so often gives vent (p. 8 ff.). Likewise in the *Chevalerie Ogier* the Emperor makes an easy sacrifice of his son Charlot for the sake of France when Ogier offers to save the country if Charlot, against whom he has a deep grudge, is delivered up to him to be put to death (10281 ff.). As Léon Gautier says: "L'Empereur consent trop facilement à la mort de Charlot; le père abdique trop tôt devant le roi." [41] It is very plainly an afterthought of the poet to make the Emperor appear to do this unwillingly, and the first impulse of the father is to consent to the sacrifice without much urging. In *Jourdains de Blaivies,* when Renier and his wife are imprisoned for refusing to deliver their master's son to his enemy, the woman conceives a plan to surrender their own son and thus save the life of young Jourdain. The father is deeply affected, but agrees—he will do anything *fors seulement Dameldieu relenquir* [a] (480 ff.). In *Amis et Amiles,* the Queen, who has become interested in Amile, offers to find hostages for him as a guarantee of his appearance at a combat; she offers herself, her son and her daughter:

> "Mes cors meïsmez le voldra ostaigier,
> Et Belyssans, por cui la bataille iert,
> Bueves mes fiz, qui moult fait a prisier." [b]
> (*Amis et Amiles,* 799)

[a] Save only to abandon God.

[b] "My own self will be willing to be hostage for him, / And Belissant, for whom the combat will be, / Bovon my son, who is much to be praised."

[41] L. Gautier, *Les Epopées Françaises,* III, p. 252.

Charlemagne accepts the offer of his wife, and as the time for fulfillment approaches, he makes gruesome preparations and informs her that he intends to carry out the sentence and that the three shall be dismembered and their ashes scattered; fortunately, the sacrifice is rendered unnecessary by the appearance of a substitute for Amile. In the same poem, Amile wishes to aid his friend Ami, who is stricken with leprosy, and offers to do anything in his power:

> "Se g'en devoie, quanques a moi apant,
> Vendre, engaigier ou livrer a torment,
> Nes mes douz fiz certez ou Belissant,
> Si le feroiie, gel voz di et creant." [a]
> (*Amis et Amiles*, 2839)

When one of the children is told by the father of his intention to kill him, he submits willingly, saying:

> "Noz sommez vostre de vostre engenrement,
> Faire en poez del tout a vo talent." [b] [42]
> (*Amis et Amiles*, 3003)

We learn from the poet of *Gaydon* that Savari, though the son of Hertaut, is himself no traitor, and that for that rea-

[a] "If I had to, all who belong to me, / To sell or pledge or deliver them up to torture, / Even my two sons, most certainly, or Belissant, / I would do it, I tell you and assure you."

[b] "We are yours, of your begetting; / You can do with us altogether after your will."

[42] Power of life and death over the son was not a poetic fiction; Caesar observed it among the Gauls (*De Bello Gallico*, VI, 18, 19), and absolute power was given by law to the father among the insular Celts (cf. J. L. Gerig, article on "Morals of the Celts" in Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. V, in press). Among the Franks this was somewhat modified by Germanic customs, but as late as the Merovingian period, "les pouvoirs du père de famille sur ses enfants avaient une étendue considérable. Il pouvait en effet les reconnaître ou les désavouer, les recueillir ou les abandonner, les garder auprès de lui ou les vendre." (C. Galy, *La Famille à l'Epoque Mérovingienne*, p. 380.)

son his father *li fel traïtres het moult son heritier*[a] (4178). In *Aye d'Avignon,* we find two young men fighting on the side of their uncle against their fathers and betraying to him a plot of the latter.[43] One of the most striking cases in which son is pitted against father is seen in *Renaut de Montauban,* where Aymon remains faithful to the Emperor and fights for him in the long war against his own sons; sometimes they meet in battle, and although the father wavers in his duty, he nevertheless attacks; but when Renaut is in a position to kill his father, he refrains, for: *au bien et au mal doit on son pere amer* (p. 94, 7). Aymon debates with himself:

> " Se je lais ces glotons, puisque je les vois ci,
> Parjuré sui vers Karle, ma foi li sui menti.
> Dame Dex me confonde, se il en vont issi.
> Las! pechieres dolans! por coi n'en sunt fui?
> Ja en iert la bataille, je le sai tot de fi,
> Et se mi fil i muerent, mult aurai cuer mari." [b]
> (*Renaut,* p. 79, 8)

Many more illustrations might be found in the French epic of harshness, lack of affection and downright hostility on the part of the father; the few here presented are merely by way of pointing out the contrast in the attitude of the uncle. It has been stated by Fellinger that " wer sein Kind lieb hat, der züchtigt es auch," and he cites:[44]

[a] The villainous traitor deeply hates his heir.

[b] "If I leave these knaves, since I see them here, / I am foresworn to Charles, I have belied my pledge to him. / May Heaven confound me, if they go away thus. / Alas! sorrowful sinner! Why did they not flee? / There will surely be a fight for it, I know for certain, / And if my sons perish in it, I shall have a very heavy heart."

[43] For citation, see page 69.

[44] F. Fellinger, *Das Kind in der altfranzösischen Literatur,* p. 157, citing *'De l'Anperis de Rome'*, etc., in Band II, *Nouveau Receuil,* par M. Méon.

Et li peres bat et chastie
Plus son enfant qui a sa grace
Que celui que il het ne face.[a]

One citation of this sort would hardly prove the point, and it may be doubted, although there is a certain amount of general truth in the statement, whether such an explanation applies to the ill-treatment of the son in our *Chansons de Geste*.

It is by no means the invariable rule in the French epic that the father is made to exercise his paternal authority with such brutality that it leads to a family feud; on the contrary, there are many passages in which the son is mentioned with pride or treated with kindness, but after all they only intensify the general impression that the son is less dear and even more of a stranger to the father than is the nephew. There are not many instances of such love and anxiety on the part of the father as are shown by Elie towards Aiol (*Aiol*, 162–279); this is in marked contrast to the treatment of Elie by his own father in the first part of *Elie de Saint Gilles*. Instances of affection on the part of the Saracen father are found: messengers report to Baligant that Roland has killed his son *qu'il tant suleie amer*[b] (*Roland*, 2782); Marsile mourns the loss of his son:

"Jo si nen ai filz ne filie ne heir;
Un en aveie; cil fut ocis hier seir."[c]
(*Roland*, 2744)

Baligant proudly calls attention to his son:

"Veez mun filz, ki Carlun vait querant
E a ses armes tanz baruns calenjant."[d]
(*Roland*, 3375)

[a] And the father beats and reprimands / More the child who has his favor / Than he does him whom he hates.

[b] Whom he was wont to love so much.

[c] "I have neither son nor daughter nor heir; / One I had; he was slain yesterday evening."

[d] "See my son, who goes seeking Charles, / And challenging with his weapons so many barons."

Elie says of the Emir:

"Plus me het l'amiraus que nul home qui vive:
Je li ocis son fil Ataignant de Sorbrie."[a]
(*Elie,* 1299)

At the siege of Antioche, Garsion's son offers to go for aid, and the father weeps when sending him into danger:

"Sire, fait il a lui, g'irai se vous volés;
Ne deves par moi estre a nul besoin fausés."
"Biaus fieus, dist Garsions, cinc cens mercis et gré."
De pitié et de dol est aval aclinés,
Les larmes li degotent fil a fil sor le nés,
Sansadoine embraça, si le baisa assés.[b]
(*Chanson d'Antioche,* V, 475)

Corsuble, father of Danemon, *moult l'ot en grant chierté*[c] (*Enfances Ogier,* 587). He grieves at his death:

Quant voit Corsubles que Danemons ses fis
Gist sor la terre et que il ert fenis,
De cuer en fu malement desconfis.[d]
(*Enfances Ogier,* 6083)

Ogier's father scolds his wife for ill-treating the Emperor's messengers; he knows that his son, a hostage, must suffer for it, and he is much grieved at the prospect:

[a] "The Emir hates me more than any man living: / I slew his son Ataignant de Sorbrie."

[b] "Sir," says he to him, "I will go if you wish; / You must not be abandoned by me in any need." / "Fair son," said Garsion, "five hundred times thanks and gratitude." / With pity and grief he bowed himself; / The tears drop in a stream upon his nose; / He embraced Sansadoine and kissed him repeatedly.

[c] Held him in great affection.

[d] When Corsuble sees that Danemon his son / Lies upon the ground and that he was dead, / He was greatly discomfited at heart by it.

Forment l'en blasme et chastie et reprent.
Bien set c' Ogiers le comparra griément;
Dedenz son cuer en ot grant mariment,
Ne set que faire, ne puet estre autrement.[a]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 337)

When Ogier and his father meet at last: *De lié cuer l'ot ses peres regardé*[b] (*Enfances Ogier*, 8008); Ogier, in speaking of his (natural) son Bauduinet, says: *Un fil avoie, Bauduinet qe j'oi chier*[c] (*Chevalerie Ogier*, 6092). In the *Mort Bauduinet*, edited by Voretzsch, the affection of Ogier for his son pervades the *Chanson*, and his grief at Bauduinet's death is expressed in very touching words. Guillaume explains the hatred of Duke Richard for him as natural:

"Et il me het plus que home del mont;
Son fill ocis, que por voir le set hon."[d]

And the Duke upbraids him:

"Tu me tolis le meillor heritier
Qui onques fust soz la chape del ciel."[e]
(*Couronnement Louis*, 2104, 2124)

Anseïs, besieged with a starving garrison in Estorge, is worried over the condition of his wife and children:

Dedens Estorges fu li vivres faillis,
N'ont pas viande a paser le tierc dis.
Dolens en est li bons rois Anseïs
Et plus li poise de ses enfans petis;

[a] Greatly he blames her for it and reprimands and reproaches her; / Well he knows that Ogier will pay for this dearly; / In his heart he had great grief; / He knows not what to do; it cannot be otherwise.

[b] With a glad heart his father looked at him.

[c] A son I had, Bauduinet, whom I held dear.

[d] "And he hates me more than any man in the world; / I slew his son, and truly people know this."

[e] "Thou tookest from me the best heir / That ever was under the mantle of the sky."

Pour la roïne estoit forment maris . . .
"Ma feme va de fain color muant
Et mi doi fil, dont me vois dolosant." [a]
(*Anseïs de Cartage*, 7576, 8280; cf. 8336, 8416)

Even Ganelon the traitor shows a spark of paternal affection for his son Baudoin, but he only makes use of him as a last argument to avoid being sent to Spain as the Emperor's messenger:

"En Sarraguce sai bien qu'aler m'estoet:
Hum ki la vait repairier ne s'en poet.
Ensurquetut si ai jo vostre soer.
Si 'n ai un filz, ja plus bels n'en estoet:
C'est Baldewins, se vit, ki ert prozdoem.
A lui lais jo mes honurs e mes fieis.
Guardez le bien, ja ne l' verrai des oilz." [b]
(*Roland*, 292)

In such passages as the above the sentiment appears perfunctory—the dramatic situation requires an expression of emotion. The father hates the slayer of his son, laments the loss of his heir, embraces the son who brings him aid or good tidings—such phases of affection, expressed largely by means of stock formulas, are not very convincing, especially as they represent an episode, and not a theme. More important is the fact that the *Narbonnais* represents the youth Romanz as fighting at Narbonne in company with his father Garin (4000 ff.);

[a] Within Estorge the food had given out, / They have not food enough to pass the third day. / Grieved at this is good King Anseïs, / And the thought of his little children weighs more upon him; / For the Queen he was deeply grieved . . . / "My wife goes about pale with hunger, / And my two sons, wherefor I go lamenting."

[b] "To Saragossa I know that I must go; / He who goes there cannot return. / But, especially, I have your sister. / And I have a son by her; one would not need a finer. / That is Baudoin, who, if he lives, will be a valiant man. / To him I leave my lands and my fiefs. / Take good care of him; I shall not see him more."

this association of father and son is not frequent. Likewise the pathetic description of the sufferings of Ami when he is about to kill his children shows more genuine emotion (*Amis et Amiles,* 2967 ff.), as does the passage in the *Enfances Vivien* which depicts Garin's hesitation to accept the sacrifice of his son (244).[45] Of a certain importance in a general way is the remark of Louis about a troop going to a tournament: *Fier m'i puis com pere en son anfant*[a] (*Foucon,* 7688), but affection, as well as fidelity, are rather a characteristic of the son than of the father. There is a curious comparison in the *Siège de Barbastre* which may be adduced in support of the theory that the relation of son did not imply any deep affection to the mediaeval poet: the French arrive at Barbastre and succor the besieged Bovon; he and his two sons see them, and throwing a mantle around him, with a son on either hand, Bovon joyously descends to meet his friends.[46] The poet adds: *Bien resanble baron entre ses .ii. norris.*[b] That is, in order to depict by a glowing simile the father and son in this happy moment, the poet paints them in terms of *nourris,* as if that relation were closer than that of son. Since nephews were often brought up by the uncle, that fact may have helped to give the word some of its expressiveness. Such passages are scattered, as indeed are those that mention the son at all, while nephews are introduced into the story on every possible occasion, and their intimate relations with the uncle dwelt upon so insistently that the reader instinctively feels that there must be an underlying reason.

[a] I can rely upon them as a father upon his child.

[b] Much does he resemble a baron between his two foster-children.

[45] The late prose version expatiates much more at the beginning on Garin's love for Vivien, but his tears and prayers are well represented afterwards in ms. A.

[46] Ms. Bib. Nat., 1448, fonds fr., fol. 144 r°; the use of this citation is due to the kindness of Professor Weeks, who has a copy of part of the ms.

There is a very large number of passages dealing with the general attitude of the uncle which cannot be classified under any characteristic or attribute; a selection from them at this point will both serve to mark the different spirit which actuates their use from that distinguishing the citations just given, and will also indicate the esoteric tone which characterizes the poetic treatment of the uncle-nephew relations.

It is significant that in the *Chanson de Roland* no mention is made of the father of the *preux chevalier;* it is his relationship to the Emperor alone that counts as a poetic theme. Planning treason, Ganelon refers to the great pride which Charlemagne has in Roland; his death will be an intolerable blow to the Emperor's ambition:

> " Carles verrat sun grant orgoill cadeir,
> N'avrat talent que jamais vus guerreit." [a]
> (*Roland,* 573)

When the Emperor learns that his nephew is to be in the rearguard, the most dangerous position, on the homeward march from Spain, he at first falls into a great rage, and then is overcome with concern:

> Quant l'ot li Reis, fierement le reguardet;
> Si li a dit: " Vus estes vifs diables;
> El' cors vus est entree mortel rage " . . .
> Li Emperere en tint sun chief enbrunc;
> Si duist sa barbe e detoerst sun gernun;
> Ne poet muer que de ses oilz ne plurt.[b]
> (*Roland,* 745, 771)

[a] "Charles will see his great pride fall; / He will have no more desire to wage war upon you."

[b] When the King hears him, he looks at him haughtily; / And said to him: "You are the devil in person; / Into your heart has come deadly rage." . . . / The Emperor at this held his head bowed; / He stroked his beard and twisted his moustache; / He cannot keep the tears from his eyes.

When it is decided to submit Ganelon's fate to the *jugement de Dieu,* the Emperor prays for the success of his champion, and after the victory he takes Thierry in his arms and dries his face for him; this is all for Roland's sake (*Roland,* 3815 ff.). In *Gui de Bourgogne,* Sanson has been a messenger to the mysterious new king of France, his own son, whom he does not recognize, but on reporting to the Emperor how pleased he was with him and how he embraced him, Charlemagne's affection makes him intuitive, and he exclaims:

"Sanses, dist l'emperere, par la vertu du ciel,
Je quit c'est vostre fis et de vostre moillier;
Maris estes ma suer, je quit qu'il est mes niés."[a]
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 3166)

When the Emperor and Gui finally meet, the poet shows us a picture of deep tenderness:

Karles connut Guion, s'est encontre levez;
Andeus, brace estendue, se sont entr'acolé.
Ains péust on avoir une grant liue alé
Que il s'entrelassassent, ne péussent parler.[b]
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 3950)

In the Guillaume cycle, the affection of Guillaume for Vivien parallels that of Charlemagne for Roland; many details correspond in the two cases: for instance, the famous passage in which Roland blows his horn and his uncle hears it and instinctively knows whose it is, has a counterpart in the *Chevalerie Vivien:*

Li Emperere s'estut, si l'escultat:
"Seignurs, dist il, mult malement nus vait.

[a] "Sanson," said the Emperor, "by the virtue of Heaven, / I think it is your son and your wife's; / You are the husband of my sister; I think he is my nephew."

[b] Charles recognized Gui and rose to meet him; / Both, with arms outstretched, embraced. / One could have gone a full league / Before they parted, or could speak.

Rollanz mis niés hoi cest jur nus defalt;
J'oi a l' corner que guaires ne vivrat." [a]
(*Roland*, 2105)

" C'est Vivïens qui sone lai cel cor,
Bien l'ai oït et al son et as mos;
Tant est aquis que pres est de la mort." [b]
(*Chevalerie Vivien*, 1530)

In the *Aliscans*, Guillaume addresses himself to the dead youth, extenuating his inability to bear him away from the field of battle:

" Biau niés, dist il, moult vos avoie chier;
Se je vos leis nus n'en doit merveillier,
N'en doi avoir honte ne reprovier,
Car n'est homs nez qui t'en osast portier." [c]
(*Aliscans*, 971)

In the *Cançun de Willame*, Guiburc commends her nephew Guischard to the care of her husband:

" Sire Guillelmes, jot chargerai Guischart.
Il est mis nies: mult est pruef de ma charn." [d]
(*Willame*, ed. Suchier, 1035)

The contrast between father and uncle is well marked in the *Enfances Vivien*, where Guillaume is throughout the nearest

[a] The Emperor stopped and listened; / "My lords," said he, "it goes ill with us. / My nephew Roland this day is lost to us; / I know by the sound of his horn that he will not live long."

[b] "It is Vivien who is sounding there that horn; / I have heard it well both by the sound and by the strains; / He is so exhausted that he is near death."

[c] "Fair nephew," said he, "full dear I held you; / If I leave you, none must marvel, / Nor must I be shamed nor reproached, / For there is no living man who would dare to bear you away."

[d] "My lord William, I shall entrust Guischart to you. / He is my nephew, and is very near to me."

and dearest; Garin plays a passive rôle, but the uncle undertakes the rescue of Vivien, going to Louis to implore his aid:

> "Or vigne avant mes sires droituriers;
> De lui meïsmes me volrai conseiller
> Com faitement aura secors mes nies." [a]
> (*Enfances Vivien*, 2998, ms. 1448)

In the *Willame*, the pagans separate the uncle from the nephew *quil poeit tant amer* [b] (2065). In *Aymeri de Narbonne*, the love of Guillaume for the four sons of his sister, the wife of Droon de Montdidier, is indicated as a matter of course:

> Forment les dut Guillaumes avoir chier:
> Neveu furent au conte.[c]
> (*Aymeri*, 4634)

Girart comes across Aymeri, *son chier neveu que il a tant amé* [d] (*Aymeri*, 4310). Girart, rescuing his nephew from a dangerous attack by the enemy, is characterized as *si ami et si dru* [e] (4355). From this moment the two are inseparable, and their names are constantly linked together in the rest of the poem. In the *Enfances Ogier*, Charlemagne decides not to kill the hostage Ogier, but to parole him in the care of his uncle Naimon, who: *son neveu avoit moult de cuer chier* [f] (436). The pagans, black as they are painted, still have family affections similar to those of the Christians: Machabré threatens with dire privations Doon, *qui ochist mon neveu que tant avoie amé* [g] (*Gaufrey*, 1578). A plain case where the nephew is pre-

[a] "Now let my rightful lord come forward; / I want to be advised by him / How and in what way my nephew shall have assistance."

[b] Whom he loved so much.

[c] Passing dear must Guillaume have held them: / They were nephews to the Count.

[d] His dear nephew whom he loved so much.

[e] His friend and his intimate.

[f] Held his nephew dear at heart.

[g] Who slew my nephew whom I loved so much.

ferred to the son is found in *Aliscans,* where Desramé encourages his nephew Baudus to attack his son Renoart (ed. Jonckbloet, 6322 ff.); of course in this instance the son is an apostate, and it is a general principle to attack relatives under such circumstances, yet it must be admitted that such treatment of a nephew or an uncle is hardly to be found.[47] The only example at hand is in the threats of Huidelon against Escorfaut and Emaudras in *Gui de Bourgogne,* but this part of the poem contains so many supernatural elements that its testimony as an early document is impaired:

"Je ferai cest mesage, bien le sachons de fi,
Vers le roi Escorfaut que mes peres norri;
Certes, il est mes niés, par verté le vos di . . .
Se il veut trespasser ne mes fais ne mes dis,
N'i aura amisté vaillant .i. angevin." [a]
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 3208)

"On l'apele Maudrane, Escorfaut respondi,
Si la tient Emaudras, .i. cuivers maléis;
Il fu de ma serour nez et angenoïs." [b]
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 3476)

Perhaps the most striking illustration of the preference for the nephew occurs in *Raoul de Cambrai,* in the poignant scene where Guerri forgets his dead sons while seeking for the body of his nephew Raoul; on finding the body he opens it, takes out the heart, and calls the knights to admire it:

Par la bataille vont les mors reversant.
Qi trova mort son pere ou son effant,

[a] "I will carry this message, know for certain, / To King Escorfaut, whom my father brought up; / Assuredly, he is my nephew, I tell you truly; / If he wishes to baffle my deeds or my words, / Friendship will not count an angevin's worth."

[b] "They call it Maudrane," Escorfaut replied, / "And Emaudras holds it, an accursed knave; / He was conceived and born of my sister."

[47] Cf. page 26.

Neveu ou oncle ou son apartenant,
Bien poés croire, le cuer en ot dolant.
Et Guerris va les siens mors recuellant;
Andeus ces fix oublia maintenant
Por son neveu Raoul le combatant.[a]
(*Raoul de Cambrai*, 3227)

Then when Raoul's mother reproaches him with not having protected her son, he exculpates himself by telling her how:

"Por mon neveu qe j'en fis aporter,
Me covint il mes .ij. fils oublier
Qe vi ocire et les menbres colper.
Bien me deüst li cuers el cors crever."[b]
(*Raoul de Cambrai*, 3583)[48]

In passages like the above, depicting the general sentiments of the uncle, the actual phraseology is of less importance than the underlying point of view on the part of the poet; the use of stock phrases is quite as general as when he is dealing with the attitude of the father, *mon neveu que avoie chier* having no more ethical value than *mon fils que avoie chier*. By themselves, these phrases would have little weight, but in the connection in which they occur is evident the deep feeling which characterizes everywhere the attitude of the uncle, so that they become the manifestation of a permeating atmosphere and thus acquire a deeper significance than the fragmentary and cur-

[a] Over the battlefield they go, turning up the dead. / Whoever found his father dead, or his child, / His nephew or uncle or near relative, / You may well believe, had a grief-stricken heart at this. / And Guerri goes collecting his dead; / Both his sons he forgot now, / For his nephew Raoul the warrior.

[b] "For my nephew, whom I brought away, / It was necessary for me to forget my two sons / Whom I saw killed and dismembered. / Verily, my heart should have broken within me."

[48] To be sure, Raoul had been entrusted to the care of his uncle (vss. 317, 3589), but in any case the situation would have been the same.

sory allusions to an occasional vein of sympathy on the part of the father. This opinion is intensified by an examination of the various points of contact between uncle and nephew, classified separately, which can be so arranged as to give an almost continuously moving picture, so to speak, of their mutual relations.

CHAPTER II

Points of Contact between Uncle and Nephew

(*a*) *Fosterage*

It is not surprising that the French epic gives little detailed information about the relations between uncle and nephew before the latter has reached the age of knighthood, when the uncle's interest seems to become more acute; it is natural that in poems devoted to the celebration of martial deeds children should play an unimportant part. Still, many of the poems make fragmentary allusions to the fosterage of the child by his uncle, a practise well understood by the poet's audience, since it was a common thing for children to be educated or trained elsewhere than in the paternal house. In the legend of Roland the child becomes a protégé of Charlemagne when about eight years old; the *Chanson de Roland* represents the hero at the point of death as longing for France and for the uncle *ki l' nurrit* (2379).[49] According to the *Renaut de Montauban*, Ogier has been brought up by Girart de Roussillon, Doon de Nanteuil and Bovon d'Aigremont; these three, says he, *furent mi oncle ki m'ont soef nori*[a] (p. 215, 23). In *Doon de Mayence*, when Doon has reached the age of fifteen, he is sent by his father to the latter's brother, who will teach him to fight, provide him with armor and a horse, and make him a knight (2114). In *Aiol*, Makaire is the uncle of Feraut and several

[a] Were my uncles, who reared me tenderly.

[49] On *nourrir*, cf. P. Guilhiermoz, *Origine de la Noblesse*, p. 431, note 54, where exception is taken to the technical sense given on p. 186 of Gautier's *La Chevalerie*, and references are given to the Vulgate and to Saint Augustine and to Racine, showing that *nutrire* and *nourrir* have the more general force of *élever*.

others, who we are told are *si neveu et de sa norichon*[a] (4617, 7203). In *Garin le Loherain,* Bishop Henri takes Garin and Begon, the sons of his brother Hervi, and they remain with him seven years and a half (I, 61). In *Auberi le Bourgoing,* Basin gives his son Auberi into the care of his brother Henri, who carries him off to Ostenne and ill-treats him (p. 7); here we have an example of the wicked uncle, to be discussed later.[50] Tibaut d'Aspremont calls the Abbé de Saint Denis his uncle and nurturer (*Gaydon,* 69–74). Rigaut hotly denounces his uncle's murderers: *Mort ont Begon, qui soëf me norri*[b] (*Mort Garin,* 1032.)

In the legend of Vivien as given in *Aliscans,* Vivien and his young brother Guichardet have been brought up for seven years by their uncle Guillaume:

> "Je vos nouri par molt grant chiereté.
> Et ma moillier au gent cors henoré
> Biaus sire niés, tant vos avoit amé,
> .vii. ans tos pleins geüs a son costé."[c]
> (*Aliscans,* ed. Halle, 783)

In the *Willame,* it is fifteen years, and Vivien reminds Guiburc of this when imploring her for aid:

> "Sez que diras dame Guiburc ma drue?
> Si li remembret de la grant nurreture,
> Plus de quinze anz qu'ele at vers mei oüe."[d]
> (*Willame,* ed. Suchier, 685)

[a] His nephews and his foster-children.

[b] They have killed Begon, who gently reared me.

[c] "I brought you up in great affection. / And my wife, comely and honored, / Fair nephew, loved you so much, / Full seven years thou layest at her side."

[d] "Knowest thou what thou shalt say to Guiburc, my beloved lady? / Whether she remembers the long bringing up, / More than fifteen years, that she gave me."

[50] See page 108 ff.

Professor Cloëtta, wishing to account for the great affection existing between Vivien and Guillaume, tries to reconcile the contradictory statements of the different poems as to the parentage of Vivien and his fosterage by Guillaume.[51] He decides that the poet of the *Chevaleris* omits all references to Vivien's parents because otherwise he would have had to account for Vivien's being brought up by his uncle instead of at home; he quotes a verse from *Aliscans* to show that Vivien's parents were dead:

> "Je sui tes oncles, n'as ore plus prochain,
> Fors Damedieu, le verai souverain."[a]
> (*Aliscans*, ed. Guessard, 827, ed. Jonckbloet, 888)

Professor Bédier, likewise, argues that the parents have been dead for years, "car jamais la pensée de Vivien ni de personne ne va vers eux."[52] It does not seem to require any explanation, however, inasmuch as it can be set down as one of the many instances in which the uncle is dearer than the father. In the *Enfances Vivien*, in which both parents appear, the uncle is again the nearest and dearest.[53] It is worthy of note that throughout the French epic the poet practically loses sight of the parents, when once he has set himself to depicting the affection between uncle and nephew; seemingly it matters little whether the parents appear in the story or not—to the poet and to his audience the important thing is the fact of tutelage by the uncle.

The *nourri* recurs continually in the *Chansons de Geste*, and

[a] "I am thy uncle, thou hast now none nearer, / Save the Lord God, the true sovereign."

[51] W. Cloëtta, *Die Enfances Vivien*, p. 72 ff.

[52] J. Bédier, *Légendes Epiques*, I, p. 409. The argument of Cloëtta based on the use of the past tense, *fils fu Garin*, is much more potent, as the epic poems commonly make use of this tense to indicate that the parent is dead, when speaking of a living character.

[53] Cf. pages 25, 40, 50.

upon him the *seigneur* relies, but particularly so when the *nourri* is also a nephew, as is often the case. "Il naît, en effet, une sorte de parenté entre le *nourri* et le seigneur qui l'a élevé, entre l'adoubé et le seigneur qui lui a donné les armes. Elever un enfant c'est prendre la place du père."[54] A German writer expresses the opinion, contrary to that of Flach, Lavisse and Gautier, that the institution of the *nourri* was not a contemporary practise, but rather a poetical motif.

"Es wird uns denn sehr wahrscheinlich, dass der Nourri in der damaligen Epik lediglich als episch-poetisches Motif lebendig war. Es lag bereits den ältesten und berühmtesten Epen, wie z. B. dem Rolandslied und Aliscans, zugrunde und wurde wohl hauptsächlich um dieser Vorbilder willen von den späteren Dichtern immer aufs neue benutzt."[55]

This writer has, however, enough material from other poems in his dissertation to show that the part of imitation is very slight, and that the cause must be deeper; he suspects its connection with primitive conditions of society, but does not take advantage of his material.[56]

(*b*) *Knighthood*

The first really important step in the life of the young *bacheler* is taken when through the ceremony of *adoubement* he enters the ranks of knighthood, and thus becomes an active member of feudal society.[57] He is now an armed horseman, a *chevalier*, and by virtue of this position his epic interest now begins. While it was ordinarily the privilege of the king to perform the ceremony of knighting, the poets frequently allot

[54] J. Flach, *Le Compagnonnage*, p. 155.

[55] Schubert, *Der Pflegesohn*, p. 52.

[56] Roland is mentioned as the *nourri* of the Emperor in *Roland*, 2380, and *Girart de Vienne*, p. 156. In the Provençal *Girart de Roussillon*, "Aimon, Aimeri et Andefroi étaient neveux de Thierry: ils avaient été élevés chez lui. C'est lui qui les avait armés et équipés." (Traduction Meyer, p. 114, § 213.)

[57] Cf. Stowell, *Titles of Respect*, p. 83.

that honor to the uncle of the youth; in the Charlemagne legend, it is king and uncle in the same person who dubs his nephews knights.[58] This is done under various circumstances: the youth is sometimes fostered and trained in the arts of war by his uncle, then knighted by him, sometimes he is sent by his father to the uncle for that particular purpose, or again, the honor is conferred after the young man has won his spurs in battle.

The example of Roland always comes first to the mind, for in the relations between him and the Emperor occur virtually all the many characteristics which make the epic poems so reminiscent of that early state of society when the mother's brother stood in reality in closest connection with the child. While the Emperor is planning to lay siege to the castle of Renaut at Montauban, his nephew Roland, still a mere youth, comes to join the army; the Emperor receives him warmly and knights him, then sends him in command of twenty thousand men to Cologne to subdue the Saxons; on seeing his nephew so unexpectedly make his appearance and on learning who he is, Charlemagne declares straightway: *Bias niés, nos vos adoberon;*[a] then the poet tells us that:

> Karles nostre emperere ot le cuer forment lié
> Por amor de Rollant c'on li a envoié.[b]
> (*Renaut de Montauban*, p. 120)

The account in *Aspremont* of Roland's knighting differs from this—as related by Gautier, it takes place in the gorge of Aspremont after Roland has defeated Eaumont in single combat

[a] Fair nephew, we will dub you knight.

[b] Charles, our Emperor, had a glad heart, / For love of Roland, who was sent to him.

[58] For examples of knighting by the King in mediaeval history, cf. Guilhiermoz, *Origine de la Noblesse*, p. 412 ff.; cf. also L. Gautier, *La Chevalerie*, p. 259 ff. The *Chansons de Geste* give this office to the king less frequently than one would suppose from these passages.

and by wresting from him his famous sword Durendal has saved his uncle's life. "Peu de temps après, en présence du Pape et de tous ses barons, l'Empereur ceignait solennellement Durandal à son neveu Roland; Naimes et Ogier lui attachaient les éperons et l'Apostole bénissait le nouveau chevalier."[59] But it must be borne in mind that here, as in all his other relations with Roland, it is as uncle and not as Emperor that Charlemagne is acting. At the beginning of *Anseïs de Cartage,* Charlemagne is represented as knighting the young Anseïs, his nephew, to whom he gives Spain and Carthage as a fief (*Anseïs,* 100 ff.). The knighting of Vivien by Guillaume is mentioned in several poems; in the *Enfances Vivien,* after the youth has been restored to his parents he soon tires of home life and longs to go to Orange to see his uncle:

"Je sui grans si sui fors et sai .xv. ans pases;
Je deusse bien estre chevaliers adoubes;
Je voel aler a Orange en non De
Veoir mon oncle Guillaume au cort nes" . . .[60]
"Si m'adoubra mes oncles Guillaumes li doutes,
Qui tant a de proeche."[a]
(*Enfances Vivien,* 4745 ff.)

He goes, and presents his request to the great hero, who grants it; as we are told in the *Chevalerie Vivien,* out of love

[a] "I am large and am strong and am fifteen and more,/ I ought really to be dubbed knight./ I want to go to Orange, by Heaven,/ To see my uncle Guillaume with the short nose." . . ./ "And he will knight me, my uncle Guillaume the formidable,/ Who has such prowess."

[59] Gautier, *Les Epopées Françaises,* III, p. 87, with reference to *Aspremont,* ms. Bib. Nat., fr. 25529, f° 55 v°.

[60] The reading *cort* is retained, and translated 'short', although recent conclusions are that it was an early scribe's misreading of *curb,* which occurs in the *Willame,* and is then translated by 'crooked'.

for his nephew the uncle knights a hundred others at the same time:

A Pantecoste, que l'on dit en estei,
Ot Vivïen, son nevol, adoubei,
Lou fil Garin, .i. suen ami charnei;
Por soie amor en ot .m. adobés.[a]
(*Chevalerie Vivien*, 7)

There is a reference to the fact also in *Aliscans:*

"Quant jou a Termes vos oi armes doné,
Por vostre amor i furent adoubé
.c. cevalier tout d'armes conraé."[b]
(*Aliscans*, ed Halle, 784)

Previously to this, Guillaume had already dubbed his nephew Bertrand knight; it is significant that when he wants to fight against the Saracens in the *Enfances Vivien*, Bertrand asks permission of his uncle, not of his father, who is nevertheless standing near by:

A sa vois clere a escrier s'est pris:
"Honcles, dist il, entendes envers mi;
Je voil les armes que tant ai deservi."[c]
(*Enfances Vivien*, 3565)

Guillaume puts him off with a promise, because he is at present too young:

"Deça Orenges me dones .I. respit
Lors vos ferai chevalier se ge vif."[d]
(*Enfances Vivien*, 3579)

[a] At Pentecost, which they say is in summer, / He knighted Vivien, his nephew, / The son of Garin, and a dear friend of his; / For love of him he knighted a thousand others.

[b] "When I gave you arms at Termes, / For love of you were knighted there / A hundred chevaliers all equipped with arms."

[c] In his clear voice he began to cry, / "Uncle," said he, "listen to me; / I want the arms which I have so well deserved."

[d] "Give me a respite as far as Orange, / Then I will make you a knight if I live."

Nevertheless the impetuous boy rushes off into the battle and performs so maany brave deeds, including a rescue of his father from the hands of the enemy, that after the fight it is decided to reward him, and so: *Li cuens Guillaumes adobat son cosin*[a] (*Enfances Vivien*, 3823).[61] When Vivien is knighted, his brother Guichard is too young to receive arms at the same time, so he is left at home with his aunt Guiborc; when he learns of Vivien's distress, he persuades her to grant him arms and he rushes off to the rescue; learning of his presence, Guillaume is pleased, despite this violation of his commands: *Ot lou Guillelmes, si lo cort acoler*[b] (*Chevalerie Vivien*, 1357). The same fact is stated in the *Cançun de Willame;* Guiborc arms Gui, who is only fifteen years old, and sends him to join Willame:

"Se jo n'i vois en l'Archamp desur mer,
Ja ne verras Guillelme ot le cnrb nes;
E si jo vois voldrai l'en amener."
Respunt Guiburc: "Dunc te larrai aler."
Dunc li vestirent une petite broigne,
Un petit helme li lacierent desure,
Petite espee li ceinstrent, mais mult bone,
Al col li pendent petite targe duble,
Puis li aportent une petite lance. . . .[c]
(*Willame*, ed. Suchier, 1539)[62]

[a] Count Guillaume knighted his cousin.

[b] Guillaume hears him, and runs to embrace him.

[c] "If I go not to Archamp by the sea, / Thou wilt ne'er see Guillaume with the crooked nose; / And if I go, I want to bring him back." / Guiburc replies: "Then I will let thee go." / Then they clothed him in a little coat of mail, / A little helm they laced upon it, / A little sword they girt upon him, but a good one, / About his neck they hang a little double targe, / Then they bring him a little lance, etc.

[61] Here *cosin* of course means 'nephew'.

[62] The confusion of names between Guiborc's nephew Guischard of the *Willame* and Vivien's brother Guichard of the *Chevalerie Vivien* does not affect the coherence of these passages; Suchier

In *Girart de Vienne,* we find the young Aymeri starting the feud between Girart and Charlemagne by reporting the joke played upon his uncle Girart by the Empress; at the first opportunity, Aymeri is knighted by his uncles Girart and Renier and his father Hernaut (*Girart,* p. 65). When Doon's father sends him away to be trained, he tells him that his uncle will make him a knight, as he does in reality (*Doon de Mayence,* 3198 ff.). In *Gormont et Isembard,* we are told that Hugon has knighted his sister's son Gontier:

> De l'autre part fut danz Guntiers,
> Cil qui fut ja sis escuiers,
> Fiz sa serur, si ert sis niez,
> —Ceo dit la geste a Saint Richier—
> Uncore n'ot oit jurs entiers
> Qu'il l' ot armé a chevalier.[a]
> (*Gormont et Isembard,* 327)

Aiol has served Louis without making known to him who he is; when the Emperor learns that he is his nephew, he regrets that he had not known it before, so that he could have knighted him on his first appearance at court:

> Quant ore entent li rois qu'Aiols estoit ses niés,
> Onques mais ne fu il si joians ne si liés;
> Isnelement le cort acoler et baisier.
> "Gentiex damoiseus sire, por coi ne le dissiés?
> Ja vous eusse jou adoubé tout premiers

[a] On the other hand was Sir Gontier, / He who was his squire, / His sister's son, he was his nephew; / Thus saith the tale at Saint Richier; / As yet it was not eight full days / Since he armed him chevalier.

points out that the poet of the *Chevalerie* simply transferred the name Guischard of the earlier *Williame* to Vivien's brother Gui, whom he utilizes in the *Chevalerie* (Suchier, *Willame,* p. lxiii ff.). Professor Weeks had previously come to the same conclusion in "The Newly Discovered *Chançun de Willame,*" *Modern Philology,* Vol. II (1904–5), p. 232 ff.

Et rendus vos honors, vos teres et vos fiés."
" Sire, je nen osoie, par les sains desousiel,
Por chou que j'ere povres, nus et mal aaisiés." [a]
(*Aiol*, 8106)

In *Raoul de Cambrai*, it is Louis, the maternal uncle, who knights Raoul (471); Guerri, the great-uncle of Gautier, knights the latter so that he may pursue vengeance upon the slayer of his uncle Raoul (3752 ff.).[63]

(*c*) *Marks of Favor*

The epic uncle distinguishes his nephew by bestowing upon him gifts and favors of various kinds, tangible and intangible, he confers dignities upon him, makes him valuable presents, and grants him fiefs. Taken symbolically, this typefies the period when it was the duty of the uncle to provide for his nephew, to set him up in life, as it were, and in the epic we see that such aggrandizement of the nephew is treated more or less as a matter of course, in such a way that it does not arouse the surprise nor the admiration of the audience at the uncle's generosity.

The *Chanson de Roland* makes of the terrible sword Durendal a living force; it is by means of this sword, which is given to him by the Emperor, that the hero Roland is enabled to reïnforce his natural prowess to the extent that he conquers all his

[a] Now when the King hears that Aiol was his nephew, / Never before was he so joyful nor so glad; / Quickly he runs to embrace and to kiss him. / "Gentle youth, sir, why did you not say so? / I would indeed have knighted you first of all, / And restored your honors, lands and fiefs." / "Sire, I dared not, by the saints of Heaven, / Because I was poor, unclad, and ill at ease."

[63] Guilhiermoz, p. 414, note 64, names two historical characters who were knighted by a maternal uncle: Etienne, future king of England, the son of Etienne de Blois, who was knighted by Henry the First (Orderic Vidal, ed. Le Prévost, IV, p. 189), and Foulque Rechin, Count of Anjou, who was knighted by Geoffroy le Bel (Marchegay et Salmon, *Chroniques des Comtes d'Anjou*, p. 379).

enemies—thus the very element of his success is contributed by his uncle. We are familiar in the work of the modern novelist Zola with that literary method which assigns a kind of superhuman force to an inanimate object which plays an important part in that it affects the relations and the actions of the characters of the novel, and we see in the *Roland* something more than a suggestion of this method: the sword is a symbol of power conferred upon the nephew, and the uncle is the *primum mobile* and the natural source of such power. Roland himself speaks of Durendal as *ma bone espée que li Reis me dunat*[a] (*Roland,* 1121); the poet of *Aiquin* alludes to the gift in a reference to the battle of Aspremont, in which Roland fought so well:

> Et y conquist Valentin l'abrivé,
> Et Durendal o le plon d'or niellé,
> Don il fut puis chevalier adobé.[b]
> (*Acquin,* 1844)

The poem of *Aspremont* itself relates the circumstances under which Roland defeats the owner of the sword in single combat, and is rewarded by the King with the blade.[64] The institution of the twelve peers as related in *Aspremont,* as a bodyguard for Roland, may be considered a signal mark of favor:

> Li Empereres ne volt plus demorer,
> .XI. vaxaus ala faire sevrer
> Des plus gentils qu'il se pot porpenser,
> Es quiex bons sires se pooit mialz fier:
> "Biax niés," dist Karles, "vos seroiz .XII. per.
> Ces vos doing je por vostre cors garder.

[a] My good sword which the King gave me.

[b] And won there Valentin the impetuous, / And Durendal with the hilt inlaid with gold, / With which he was afterwards knighted.

[64] Cf. page 48. For other legends, cf. Gautier, *Chanson de Roland,* vs. 2316 ff. and note, and J. Geddes, *Chanson de Roland,* pp. xxxvi and 184, note 2.

Cist iront la ou vos voldroiz aler.
Tot ce feront que voldroiz commander." [a]
(*Aspremont*, 55 v°)[65]

Roland's horn, the *olifant*, is also a gift from the Emperor: *A son neveu Rollant l' olifant c' ot conquis* [b] (*Renaut*, p. 136, 7). An allusion to Durendal, the *olifant*, and the horse Veillantif is found in *Aspremont*, where the Emperor says:

" Ge ai le cors le cheual et le brant
Que ge ai doné à mon neueu Rollant." [c]
(*Aspremont*, ed. Bekker, p. 47, col. 1)

A peculiar mark of favor, indicative of the position which Roland holds with reference to Charlemagne, is shown in the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne:* the knights, on being entertained by King Hugon, indulge in the festive sport of making *gabs* before going to sleep, and after the Emperor has made his merry boast, instead of calling upon one of the older peers who are with him, he turns to his nephew, saying: *Gabes, bels nies Rollans* (469). That this is really a distinction is shown by the fact that Roland in his turn calls next upon his own best friend Oliver. In the *Renaut de Montauban*, when the Emperor catches sight of the wonderful horse Bayard, he immediately longs to possess him in order to give him to Roland:

" Cis cevax est mult bons, ves com va randonant.
Je le vaurrai doner à mon neveu Rollant." [d]
(*Renaut*, p. 130, 32)

[a] The Emperor does not wish to stay longer; / Twelve vassals he went and set aside, / The noblest that he could think of, / On whom a good master could best rely: / "Fair nephew," said Charles, "twelve peers shall you be. / These I give you for a body-guard. / They will go wherever you would go. / They will do all that you may command."

[b] To his nephew Roland the horn that he has won in combat.

[c] "I have the horn, the horse, and the blade / Which I gave to my nephew Roland."

[d] "This horse is very good; see how he goes speeding. / I want to give him to my nephew Roland."

[65] Cited by Gautier, *Epopées Françaises*, III, 89.

In *Otinel,* when Charlemagne has conquered the Saracens, he sends for the barons in order to distribute fiefs among them; it goes without saying that he does not forget his nephew in this bounty:

> Nostre emperere ne s'est mie oubliez:
> Apres mengier a son nevou mandez.[a]
> (*Otinel,* 2100)

In the *Roland,* the Emperor sends word to Marsile that if he will become his vassal he shall receive half of Spain, but only half, for *L'altre meitiet avrat Rollanz li ber*[b] (XXVI, 7). In *Gui de Bourgogne,* Gui tries to make capital out of the well known intentions of Charlemagne with regard to his nephew by pretending to Huidelon that the Emperor has quarrelled with Roland and that he swears to disinherit him and give Spain to Huidelon if the latter will come to him and embrace Christianity (vs. 1703 ff.). These citations show how current was the tradition of the Emperor's partiality for his sister's son, so that Ganelon has good reason when he designates him as *ses niés, li quens Rollanz, li riches* (*Roland,* 585); *riches* of course means 'powerful,' and is an allusion to the Emperor's favor.

In *Anseïs de Cartage,* the Emperor heaps material favors upon the young Anseïs, who is his sister's son, knighting him and giving him Spain and Carthage as a fief (*Anseïs,* 100 ff.). During the Saxon wars he plans to crown Baudoin, another nephew, and give him the kingdom of Guiteclin, a plan which he accomplishes upon the defeat and death of the Saxon king:

> "Biaus niés, or vous souviengne de ce chastoiement;
> Car, se me voulés croire, je vous ai en couvent
> K'ainçois .i. an passé ou plus prochainement

[a] Our Emperor has not forgotten; / After eating, he summoned his nephew.

[b] The other half shall Roland, the baron, have.

Vous ferai coronner, et Sebile au cors gent
Vous cuit donner a femme, se Diex le me consent." [a]
(*Saisnes,* LXXV, 14)

King Louis, in *Raoul de Cambrai,* at first shows great favor to his nephew Raoul, but has no fief for him; he makes promises to give him the first vacant one, and presently keeps his word and gives Raoul certain lands, in the acquirement of which Raoul starts a feud that does not end even with the loss of his own life (vs. 469 ff.). In *Aiol,* we find Makaire calling upon his nephews for aid, and reminding them of the bounty they owe to him:

"Où estes vos," dist il, "mes parentés?
Vos qui de moi tenés bours et chités." [b]
(*Aiol,* 4430)

In *Gaufrey,* Gloriant bestows Vauclere, the property of Doon, upon his nephew Maprin:

"Mapris, venés avant; bien vous estes encontré;
Vous estes mon neveu, si vous ai moult amé.
Vauclere vous otroie, le païs grant et lé." [c]
(*Gaufrey,* 1520)

In the *Enfances Ogier,* Naimon encourages his nephew Ogier, who is about to fight in single combat, by giving him his own weapons:

[a] "Fair nephew, now bear in mind these instructions; / For, if you will believe me, I promise you / That before a year has passed, or sooner, / I will crown you, and Sebile, fair of form, I propose to give you to wife, / If God grants it."

[b] "Where are you," said he, "my kin? / You who through me hold towns and cities."

[c] "Maprin, come forward; well-met are you; / You are my nephew, and I have loved you much. / Vauclere I grant you, that land great and broad."

"Biaus niez," dist Namles, "demain serez portans
Mes droites armes, car teus est mes coumans." [a]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 2535)

An example of the practise of giving some trophy to a favorite nephew is found in the story of the famous helmet of Marsile, which Ganelon had:

Guibors d'Orenges lo dona puis Folcon
En la bataille vers Tiebaut l'Esclavon.[b]
(*Foucon*, ed. Schultz-Gora, 101)

Louis likewise, when knighting his sister's son Raoul, gives him a trophy:

Nostre empereres ama molt le meschin;
L'erme li donne qi fu au Sarrazin
Q'ocist Rolans desor l'aigue del Rhin.
Desor la coife de l'auberc doublentin
Li a assis, puis li a dit: "Cousin,
Icis ver hiaumes fu a .i. Sarrazin." [c]
(*Raoul*, 471)

(*d*) *Uncle Provides a Wife for his Nephew*

One of the pleasantest duties of the epic uncle is the bestowal of a wife upon his nephew; this seems to be treated by the poets more in the light of a reward for faithful services, although it can sometimes be considered purely a mark of affectionate interest in the nephew's welfare. In the *Girart de Vienne*, Charlemagne affiances Roland to Aude, and tells her

[a] "Fair nephew," said Naimon, "tomorrow you shall be carrying / My own weapons, for such is my command."

[b] Guiborc of Orange gave it then to Foucon / In the battle against Tibaut the Slav.

[c] Our Emperor loved the lad much; / The helmet of the Saracen he gives him, / Whom Roland slew across the water of the Rhine. / Upon the head-piece of the double hauberk / He placed it for him, then said: "Cousin, / This shining helm was a Saracen's."

that *N'a chevalier millor el mont vivant*[a] (p. 173). In *Gui de Bourgogne,* when the two French armies meet, he brings the happy couple together again:

> Li rois prist bele Audain, s'a Rollant apelé:
> "Biaus niés, vés ici cele que tant devés amer."
> "Si fas je voir, biaus oncles, ja mar le mescrerés."[b]
> (*Gui de Bourgogne,* 4012)

After Roland's death he feels it necessary to do something for Aude, and so offers her the hand of his son Louis, hardly an equivalent for that of Roland in his estimation, but the best that he can do; so, to make the offer more enticing, he calls Louis a *mult esforciet escange:*

> "Jo t'en durrai mult esforciet escange:
> C'est Loevis, mielz ne sai jo qu'en parle:
> Il est mis filz e si tiendrat mes marches."[c]
> (*Roland,* 3714)

The Emperor promises his nephew Baudoin several times to give him Sebile, the wife of Guiteclin the Saxon, and after the latter has been conquered he does this:

> Baudoin apela, le fil de sa seror:
> Toz est ses cuers espris de joie et de baudor.
> S'il en a la saisine, ne plaint pas son labor;
> Ne la randroit nelui por chastel ne por tor.
> "Dame, ce dit li rois, "ci a .i. poigneor;
> Assez est riches hom, fiz est de ma seror.
> Se vos par mariage le volez a seignor,

[a] There is no better knight alive on earth.

[b] The King took the beautiful Aude, and called Roland: / "Fair nephew, see here the one you must love so much." / "So do I, truly, fair uncle; doubt it not."

[c] "I will give you a very advantageous substitute; / That is, Louis, more I cannot say; / He is my son, and will have my states."

Baptisier vos feroie a loi de Creator.
Rois sera, et vos dame de ceste grant honor." [a]
(*Saisnes*, CCV, 12)

An allusion to this is found in the *Renaut:*

Sebile la roïne qui tant ot cler le vis,
Dona a son neveu Baudoin le marchis;
A son neveu Rollant l'olifant c'ot conquis.[b]
(*Renaut*, p. 136, 7)

Ordinarily, the disposal of the lady's hand is apparently not considered of much importance to the lady herself; Sebile however is pleased, being already in love with Baudoin, but instances occur where the matter is settled without consulting either of the interested parties, as in *Garin le Loherain*, where Count Bernart says, speaking of Blancheflor:

"Car la donnons dant Isoré le gris,
Ou mon neveu Guillaume de Monteclin." [c]
(*Garin*, II, 6)

Auberi is besought by his nephew Gasselin to bestow upon him the lady of his choice:

"An non dieu, oncle, d'autre chose vos pri:
Ie uos demant la fille au roi Ouri." [d]
(*Auberi*, ed. Tobler, 145, 20)

[a] Baudoin he called, his sister's son; / All kindled is his heart with joy and ardor. / If he has possession of her, he regrets not his toil; / He would not give her up to anyone for castle nor tower. / "Lady," said the King, "here is a warrior; He is a man of power, my sister's son. / If you wish him for your lord in marriage, / I would have you baptized according to the law of the Creator. / He will be king, and you the lady of this great domain."

[b] Sebile, the queen so bright of face / He gave to his nephew Baudoin the marquis; / To his nephew Roland the horn which he had won.

[c] "Pray let us give her to Sir Isoré the gray, / Or to my nephew, Guillaume de Monteclin."

[d] "In Heaven's name, uncle, I ask another thing of you: / I ask of you the daughter of King Ouri."

In *Anseïs de Mes,* Bierengier finds a husband for Asseline in the person of his nephew Beraut, and suggests that if the latter does not want her, he could bestow her hand upon another nephew, Fouqueret:

> "Biaus sire niés," dist Bierengiers li gris,
> "Je vos donrai et le rose et le lis
> Et le plus biele que dex a el mont mis."[a]
> (*Anseïs de Mes,* 449, 10)

Later, Bierengier consoles Clarisse for the death of her son Anseïs by offering her his nephew Fouqueret:

> Chou dist li quens: "Dame ne vos anuit!
> .I. neveut ai Fouqueret le petit . . ."[b]
> (*Anseïs de Mes,* 471, 1)

(*e*) *Nephew as Messenger*

Not only do we find our epic uncle setting up his nephew as ruler over conquered territory, but we find also many instances of his giving the nephew other important work to do: he makes him a messenger or an envoy, or entrusts an army to him. It is not so much the mere fact that a nephew is made the messenger of his uncle that is important, as that it shows the close, confidential relations which exist between the two. It would seem that the choicest plums of the diplomatic service fall into the mouth of the nephew, that the most desirable offices in general come to him, yet there are instances where he is sent on the most dangerous missions, in which death is almost certain; and such instances give the poet an opportunity for enlarging upon the distress and despair of the uncle at the necessity which compels him thus to expose the life of his favorite. Even more significant, perhaps, is the fact that it is

[a] "Fair nephew, Sir," said Bierengier the gray, / "I will give you both the rose and the lily, / And the fairest that God has placed in the world."

[b] Thus spoke the Count: "Lady, grieve not! / I have a nephew, Fouqueret the young."

not so often the great heroes, the well-known nephews, who are selected by the poet to perform the duties of a messenger, as the less important nephews, who are sometimes introduced into the story merely for such a purpose; it becomes, then, not an attribute which the poet assigns to his great hero in order to heighten his literary value, but a characteristic phase of the relationship in general.

In the Guillaume cycle, the nephew frequently plays the part of the Greek chorus, giving Guillaume information which the poet wants him to have for the continuance of the story. It is not always easy in our poems to separate the traditional from the literary material, and to be frank, this element of the nephew-theme appears on the surface to be a literary invention, or would so appear, were it not that it is also a corroborative detail of the general predominance of the nephew, which has a legendary basis. Guillaume's nephew Bertrand brings him the important news that the Emperor has in his disgust at his son Louis vowed to make him a monk:

> D'une forest repere de chacier:
> Ses niés Bertrans li corut a l'estrier.[a]
> (*Couronnement Louis,* 116)

When Acelin becomes turbulent and threatens to seize the crown of Louis, Guillaume sends his own nephew Aliaume to call him to order:

> Il en apela Alelme le baron.
> " Va, si me di Acelin l'orgoillos
> Dreit viegne faire Looïs son seignor
> Isnelement, quar de lui se plaint molt." [b]
> (*Couronnement Louis,* ed. Langlois, 1785)

Guielin is selected by Guillaume to get a message through the lines at the siege of Orange:

[a] From a forest he is returning, from hunting; / His nephew Bertrand ran to his stirrup.

[b] He called Aliaume the baron. / "Go, and say for me to Acelin the haughty / That he come straightway and make Louis his lord / Quickly, for he makes much complaint of him."

"Niés Guielins," ce dit li cuens Guillelmes!
"Desi a Nymes ne fines né ne cesses,
Bertran ton frere me diras cez noveles,
Qu'il me secore o la gent de sa terre." [a]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 1412)

Another nephew, Girart, brings Willame the news of Vivien's danger at the battle of l'Archamp:

"Avant, Girarz! Si di de tes noveles!"
Co dist Girarz: "Jo'n sai assez de pesmes." [b]
(*Chançun de Willame*, ed. Suchier, 961)

Gautier is a messenger to Aymeri:

Quens Aymeris a Gautier apelé
Qui lo mesaje lor ot dit et conté:
"Biau sire niés, un petit m'entendez." [c]
(*Mort Aymeri*, 481)[66]

In *Girart de Roussillon*, Foucon is the close friend and frequently the envoy of his uncle Girart (vs. 1381 ff.).[67] Foucon and Amadeus are Girart's envoys to the Emperor to sue

[a] "Nephew Guielin," said Count Guillaume, / "From here to Nîmes stay thee not nor stop; / To Bertrand thy brother thou wilt tell this tidings, / That he assist me with the men of his land."

[b] "Hither, Girart, and tell thy news!" / Said Girart: "I know some full bad."

[c] Count Aymeri called Gautier, / Who told and related the message to them: / "Fair nephew, Sir, listen to me a little."

[66] Cf. page 10. It is plausible that the poet really had in mind the nephew relationship here.

[67] In the Provençal *Girart*, Foucon offers on behalf of Girart to become a hostage if the Emperor will cease his warfare: "Nous serons à titre d'ôtages, par la foi que je vous dois, cent barons de naissance, damoiseaux choisis." (Translation of P. Meyer, p. 63, § 119.) In the Provençal poem, Foucon is the cousin of Girart, being the son of Odilon, although the poet uses the term *neps* (cf. pp. 161 and 259, notes); in the French *Girart* and in *Renaut* he is a nephew, and in the *Mort Maugis* a relative.

for peace in *Renaut de Montauban* (p. 37 ff.). In *Boeve de Haumtone,* Graunder is his uncle's messenger to the prison in which Bovon is confined; when he learns of Bovon's escape, Bradmund and his nephew pursue him together:

> Meymes icel jour Bradmund se leva,
> Son neveu Graunder a sei apella:
> "Graunder," fet Bradmund, "a la prison tost va,
> Dy a mes chartrers, ke il veignent a mei sa." [a]
> (*Boeve de Haumtone,* 1147)

The Abbé Liétri is the messenger of his uncle Garin to discuss a truce with Froment, who says:

> "Vos me mandastes par l'abé Liéteri
> Paiz et acorde deci a quinze dis." [b]
> (*Mort Garin,* 227; cf. 6 ff.)

Another nephew of Garin, Auberi, is a messenger in the sense that he is commissioned to escort Garin's son Girbert to Pepin to be knighted by him (*Mort Garin,* 364). In *Anseïs de Mes,* the relations between Berengier and his nephews are very close, and Fouqueret is commissioned to carry his uncle's standard:

> "Fouques biaus niés, vos portrés m'oriflor.
> Gardés que Flandres i ait par vos honor!" [c]
> (*Anseïs de Mes,* 411, 1)

In the *Renaut de Montauban,* no sooner has the youth Roland presented himself to the astonished Emperor as his sister's son than he is knighted by his uncle and sent off in charge of twenty thousand men to defend Cologne against the Saxons:

[a] On that day Bradmund rose, / His nephew Graunder he called to him: / "Graunder," said he, "to the prison go speedily, / Say to my warders that they come to me here."

[b] "You sent me word by the Abbé Liétri / Of peace and harmony for fifteen days from now."

[c] "Fair nephew Foucon, you will carry the standard; / Take care that Flanders receive honor through you."

"Dous niés," dist l'emperere, "je t'en doing le congié" . . .
"Biaus niés, je vos ai ore mon barnage chargié.
Gardés par vos ne soit honi ne vergoignié." [a]
(*Renaut*, p. 120)

In the *Destruction de Rome*, when Charlemagne hears of the havoc wrought in Rome by the pagans, he sends his nephew Gui to succor the town:

Et Guion de Bourgoigne a a lui apelle:
Fils ert de sa seror et de sa parente:
"Cosins, vous en irrez socoure la cite." [b]
(*Destruction de Rome*, 1179)

When the Emperor is commanded by an angel to go and pray at the shrine of Saint Jacques, he leaves his entire army in charge of Gui, admonishing him: *Et vos, biaus sire nies, de ceste oevre panses* [c] (*Gui de Bourgogne*, 4126). Guillaume, when placing a guard around the monastery preparatory to delivering King Louis, gives an important post to a nephew:

Li cuens Guillelmes en apela Gualtier
Le Tolosain, ensi l'oï noncier,
Fill de sa suer, un gentil chevalier:
"A cele porte qui torne vers Peitiers,
La m'en irez, filz de franche moillier,
Ensemble o vos avra vint chevaliers;
Guardez n'en isse nuls om qui seit soz ciel." [d]
(*Couronnement Louis*, ed. Langlois, 1657)

[a] "Gentle nephew," said the Emperor, "I give you leave." . . . / "Fair nephew, I have now entrusted to you my barons. / Take care by you they be not shamed nor dishonored."

[b] And Gui de Bourgogne he called to him; / He was his sister's son and his kin; / "Cousin, you will go to the aid of the city."

[c] And you, fair nephew, Sir, mind this work.

[d] Count Guillaume called Gautier / The Tolosan, thus I heard him named, / His sister's son, a noble chevalier; / "To that gate which faces Poitiers, / There shall you go, son of a noblewoman; /

The poet's general conception of the "avuncular" relations militates against allowing the nephew to be sent deliberately into danger, while as we have seen the tendency is to represent the father as making an easy, if not a willing sacrifice of the son. When the story absolutely requires that the nephew be sacrificed, either apparently or really, the sentiment on the part of the uncle appears much more genuine than that of the father. The story of the *Roland* revolves in large measure around the attitude of the uncle, who is compelled by force of circumstances to forego his inclination and his duty to favor and to protect his nephew. It does not seem possible that such poignant grief as is depicted in many passages of the poem can come wholly from the poet's imagination, but rather does the treatment bear the impress of a legendary point of view common to the uncle in general, in which the personal equation so far as the poet is concerned is reduced to a minimum. The apparent contradiction of this theory to be found in the *Enfances Vivien* is easily explained: the legend of the son acting as hostage for the father is mentioned in the *Chevalerie Vivien*, which says of Vivien that:

> Filz fu Garin, qui tant par est proisiez,
> Qui d'Anseüne fu sire et jostisiers;
> En Roncevaus fu il pris et liez,
> Si l'en mena Marados vostre niés.
> Por Vivien fu il cuens ostagiez.[a]
> (*Covenant Vivien*, ed. Jonckbloet, 143; cf. 121)[68]

This incident is naturally enlarged upon by the later poem, in which it becomes an important theme; here we see Guillaume

Together with you will be twenty knights; / Take care there issue forth no man whatsoever upon earth."

[a] He was son to Garin, so much esteemed, / Who was of Anseüne the lord and judge; / At Roncevaux he was captured and bound, / And Maradoc your nephew led him away. / For Vivien was the count held in ransom.

[68] The last verse reads in the Terracher edition: *Par cel glouton fut li cuens ostegiés* (vs. 142).

deciding regretfully but firmly that Vivien shall take his father's place as hostage in a pagan prison, but although he is condemning his nephew to apparent death, Guillaume vows to avenge him most abundantly. The earlier versions of the poem say very little of Garin's love for his son, while representing as always the demonstrativeness of the mother's affection; on the other hand, the late prose version goes into a long description of the father's attitude, and in fact, the very ascription of Garin as father to Vivien is of late origin; thus we see that to the later author the paternal sentiment in general makes the stronger appeal, while to the earlier poet that of the uncle assumes the greater weight.[69] Now when Guillaume says:

> "Neuos et oncles et parens sont asses,
> Mais vn sien freire ne puet on recourer;
> Nies Vivien, com ies a Terme nes,
> Ma boche juge qe tu soies liures
> En la prison por ton pere saluer." [a]
> (*Enfances Vivien*, 337, ms. Bib. Nat. 1448)

he is not speaking in harmony with the sentiments of the poems of the twelfth century; the *Enfances* in general, as an epic genre, are of later origin than the other poems, and they illustrate very well the decline of the epic importance of the nephew just as presumably the tradition of an older state of society declined in the minds of poets; as the *Enfances* in many instances invented a father whom they might attach to great heroes, so they probably invented sentiments like the above. The father and his sentiments, then, assume an importance in the later poems which is foreign to the point of view of the earlier ones, and which comes about through a growing desire

[a] "Nephews and uncles and relatives are plenty, / But one's brother cannot be replaced. / Nephew Vivien, as thou wert born at Termes, / My mouth decides that thou shalt be consigned / To prison, to save thy father."

[69] Cf. *Enfances Vivien*, 244 ff. The Wahlund edition gives the readings of the various mss.

for novelty; as Professor Lanson wittily puts it: "*Les fils engendrent les pères, et les aïeux naissent après les pères.*" [70]

(*f*) *Solidarity between Uncle and Nephew*

The solidarity between uncle and nephew is consistent and marked: not only is the nephew singled out for superlative favor and given work of the greatest consequence to do by his uncle, but the latter acts always as the guide and adviser of the young chevalier. The anxiety of the uncle when his nephew is in danger and his rejoicing at his success in battle give rise to some of the most intense passages of the French epic. The bond between the two is most sympathetic; if it is threatened by occasional wordy quarrels, it rarely suffers serious damage. The poets appear fond of introducing an exchange of vilification—*vox et praeterea nihil*—not in order to arouse the apprehension of the listener for the fate of his favorite character, but merely as a comic element which comes as a necessary relief to the intensity of the passions of war and the animosity of enemies, and the initiated hearer is well aware that the bond is not so quickly broken as that between the poetic father and son. It is upon the nephew that the uncle depends for aid when in danger and for revenge when worsted, and the nephew looks to the uncle for the same ministrations. In order to portray with exactness the close association of the two, it would be necessary to tell the story in detail of many poems, which is obviously impossible here. A few illustrations of the various phases of such association must suffice, but it is necessary to bear constantly in mind that the very sum and substance of the plot and the very life of the poem depend in many instances upon the closeness of the uncle-nephew relations, which is revealed far more convincingly by the general tone than could be done by any detached quotation from the actual words of the poet. Many scattered passages might be adduced to show the regard of Charlemagne for his nephew Roland, but would they be as conclusive as the impression which a comprehensive read-

[70] G. Lanson, *Littérature Française*, p. 39.

ing of the entire *Chanson de Roland* must give? The whole cycle of Guillaume brings out the fundamental conception of solidarity as expressed between Guillaume and Vivien, Guillaume and Bertrand, and others. What would the Emperor's Saxon war be but a dreary recital of military details if it were not for the dramatic interest in the fortunes of his nephew Baudoin? Undoubtedly the mediaeval reciter held his audience spell-bound by the stories of battles and tournaments, by the minute descriptions of all their phases, and by the vigorous delineation of the lust of conquest and the glory of religious proselyting, but after all must we not assume that the element of human interest was also very keenly felt both by the poet and by his listeners?

Léon Gautier has brought out many parallels between the French and the Greek epic;[71] the same comparison can be made of the human interest in the fortunes of the heroes in both epics. And in the French epic it is the nephew whose career we watch with interest, admiration, or suspense; it is not because he is the nephew of a great legendary personage, for since the epic deals with kings and nobles the nephew must of necessity be of high rank himself, but just because he is a nephew, just because of that relationship in itself, and just because the whole poetic legend of Charlemagne and of Guillaume and of other dominant spirits brings out the significance of that relationship. Then too the French epic introduces numerous minor characters who exemplify the same attitude of solidarity and mutual dependence—difficult to enumerate, so many are there—and yet are introduced more or less incidentally into the story. A striking example of the solidarity between uncle and nephew is found in *Raoul de Cambrai*. Duty to a master comes before all else in the mediaeval conception of allegiance, so that Bernier at first does not waver in his allegiance to Raoul, not even when the latter in the most heartless manner destroys the convent of Bernier's mother, and the abbess and

[71] *Epopées Françaises*, III, IV, *passim*. See also Andrew Lang, *Homer and his Age*, pp. 297–309 (*French Mediaeval Epics*).

her nuns perish in the flames, but when Raoul attempts to drive Bernier's uncles from their land, then the squire rebels. Still, he is willing to continue in his service if Raoul will become reconciled with his opponents. Here the uncle plainly counts more than the master:

"Je suis vostre hom, a celer nel vos qier,
De mon service m'as rendu mal loier:
Ma mere as arce la dedens cel mostier,
Dès q'ele est morte n'i a nul recovrier.
Or viex mon oncle et mon pere essilier!
N'est pas mervelle s'or me vuel corecier:
Il sont mi oncle, je lor volrai aidier,
Et près seroie de ma honte vengier." [a]
(*Raoul*, 1644)

"Et pardonrai trestot, par saint Richier,
Mais que mes oncles puisse a toi apaier." [b]
(*Raoul*, 2284; cf. 3070)

When Bernier has finally killed Raoul, the latter's uncle Guerri rejects all attempts at reconciliation made by the King on behalf of Bernier, and is indignant that Louis looks upon Bernier with favor, since Raoul was Louis' nephew:

"Comment poroie esgarder cel glouton
Qi mon neveu ocist en traïson?
Fix ert vo suer, qe de fit le seit on." [c]
(*Raoul*, 4867)

[a] "I am your man, I wish not to conceal it from you, / Thou hast given me poor reward for my service; / My mother thou hast burned within that monastery; / Now that she is dead there is no redress. / Now thou wouldst destroy my uncle and my father! / No wonder is it if now I wish to loose my anger; / They are my uncles, I wish to aid them, / And I should be near avenging my shame."

[b] "And I will pardon all, by Saint Richier, / If only I may reconcile my uncles and you."

[c] "How could I look at that villain / Who slew my nephew by treachery? / He was your sister's son, for it is known of a certainty."

In *Aye d'Avignon,* Charlemagne abandons Garnier, yielding to the representations of his enemies; two of Garnier's nephews overhear the plot to betray him, and although they are in the service of the Emperor, their duty towards their uncle makes them rebuke Charlemagne and leave his court:

> Garniers ot .ii. neveus, Guichart et Alori,
> Qui sont de ses serors né et engenuï;
> Li .i. fu fiz Sanson et li autre Amaugin,
> Et servoient por armes Karlon le fiz Pepin.
> Quant oent el palais le conseill descouvrir,
> C'est de Nentuel abatre et de Garnier trahir,
> Ce ne puent il onques endurer ne soffrir.[a]
> (*Aye d'Avignon,* 2649)

Family ties should be so strong that Pepin ought not to be angry, so the Abbé of Saint-Denis tells him, when a dear friend has been killed by his nephew-in-law:

> Se Gascelin a mort .i. aversier,
> Vers si haut homme ne vous devés irier;
> Car vostre niece a or prise a mollier.[b]
> (*Auberi,* ed. Tarbé, p. 131)

Auberi himself has so great faith in the bond between uncle and nephew that he will not believe his own uncle is a traitor, who is planning to kill him:

> "Ja est mes oncles Oedes et mes amis:
> Et si dui fil sont mi germain cousin.

[a] Garnier had two nephews, Guichart and Alori, / Who were conceived and born of his sisters. / The one was son to Sanson, the other to Amauguin, / And with arms they served Charles the son of Pepin. / When they hear within the palace the plot disclosed, / That is, to overthrow Nanteuil and to betray Garnier, / This they can never endure nor suffer.

[b] "If Gascelin has killed an enemy, / Towards a man so high you must not feel angry, / For he has now taken your niece to wife."

Ne me faudront por home qui soit vis." [a]
(*Auberi*, ed. Tarbé, p. 17)

In the Tobler extracts from *Auberi*, the bond between Auberi and his sister's son Gascelin appears of the closest; the two are inseparable companions, and Gascelin exclaims *Ie sui vos nies, ie ne vos faudrai ja* [b] (p. 12, 30).

The relationship is sometimes made use of to make a taunt or a threat more bitter. During the combat between Otinel and Roland, the former cries to the Emperor: *Vous ocirai vostre neveu Rollant* [c] (*Otinel*, 337). Acelin says to Aleaume, a nephew of Guillaume: *Voir, de ton oncle ne dorreie un denier* [d] (*Couronnement Louis*, 1831). When Tedbald declares that Willame will not dare come to the battle, Vivien passionately gives him the lie:

"Cil nen est nez de sa mere ne vis,
De ça la mer ne de dela le Riu,[72]
N'entre les noz n'entre les Arabiz,
Mielz de mei ost grant bataille tenir,
Fors sul Guillelme al curb nes le marchis.
Il est mes uncles, vers lui ne m'aatis." [e]
(*Cançun de Willame*, ed. Suchier, 83)

Girart taunts the coward Esturmi, whom he has unhorsed, saying:

[a] "Indeed, he is my uncle Odon and my friend, / And his two sons are my cousins german. / They will not fail me for any man alive."

[b] I am your nephew, I shall never fail you.

[c] I shall slay your nephew Roland for you.

[d] Forsooth, I would not give a farthing for your uncle.

[e] "He is not born of mother, nor is alive, / This side the sea, nor across the Channel, / Neither among us nor among the Arabs, / Who, more than I, dare fight a great battle, / Save only Guillaume of the crooked nose, the marquis. / He is my uncle, with him I do not rival."

[72] Suchier conclusively defends his reading *Riu;* the ms. has *rui*.

"Ultre, lechiere! Prise as or mortel hunte;
Net vanteras ja a Tedbald tun uncle." [a]
(*Cançun de Willame,* ed. Suchier, 425)

The closeness of the relations between Guillaume and his nephews is evident from many passages in the Guillaume cycle. During the siege of Orange, Guillaume relies upon the aid which his relatives will bring him, and refuses to leave the palace where he has taken his stand; in fact, it is his nephew Bertrand who comes to his rescue:

Lor heaumes ostent li chevalier vaillant,
Puis s'entrebesent, de joie vont plorant.
Li cuens Bertrans l'en apele avant:
"Comment t'est, oncles? Ne'l me celer néant." [b]
(*Prise d'Orenge,* 1800; cf. 1090, ff.)

When Vivien is ready to succumb at the battle of Aliscans, his thoughts revert to his uncle, and at the very point of death he strives to keep on fighting, in order to do honor to his relationship to Guillaume:

"Ne vos verrai ja mais, oncles Guillermes,
Ne mon lignage, mes amis ne ma geste;
Hui en orroiz si tres pesme novele! . . .

Oncles Guillelmes, ja mais ne me vareis!
Dame Guibor, Deus vos croise bonteis. . . .

Se ge n'abat des miolz enparenteis,
Et des mellors et des plus abrivés,
Se ge les puis devent moi ancontreir,
Ans ne fui niés dan Guillelme au cor neis." [c]
(*Chevalerie Vivien,* ed. Terracher, 606, 1455, 1902)

[a] "Away, knave! Thou hast received a mortal shame; / Nevermore wilt thou boast to Tedbald thy uncle."

[b] Their helms the valiant knights remove, / Then they embrace, and go weeping for joy. / Count Bertrand calls out to him: / "How is it with thee, uncle? Conceal it in no wise from me."

[c] "Never again shall I see you, uncle Guillaume, / Nor my kin, my friends, nor my family; / Today you will hear such very bad

The attraction of the uncle towards an unknown nephew is seen when Girart de Vienne is immediately drawn to Oliver, whom he sees for the first time:

"Voir," dist Girars, "cestui aurai je chier,
Que molt fors me resamble." [a]
(*Girart de Vienne*, p. 54)

When Rainier kills one of the Emperor's partisans Aymeri says to him:

"Par foi, biaz oncles," ce li dist Aimeris,
"Or vos aim plus que home qui soit vis." [b]
(*Girart de Vienne*, p. 65)

In another poem, Aymeri rebukes the Emperor for having unjustly deprived Girart of his land:

"Mès bien savez trop aviez mespris,
Qant a mon oncle toliez son pais." [c]
(*Aymeri de Narbonne*, 730)

Apparently uncles and nephews are usually in each other's confidence, for the messenger in *Aiol*, after vowing that he will not betray Aiol's secret to *nul home en tere qui soit sousiel* [d] (3955), thinks that that is not sufficiently comprehensive, for he promises not to reveal it even to *neveu ne a oncle ne a moillier*. Guillaume and his nephews are connected even in the minds of

news!" . . ./"Uncle Guillaume, nevermore will you see me!/ Lady Guiborc, may God increase his favors to you." . . ./"If I fell not some of their best connected,/ And best and most eager,/ If I can meet them face to face,/ Never was I nephew to Sir Guillaume of the crooked nose."

[a] "Forsooth," said Girart, "this one I shall hold dear,/ For he very much resembles me."

[b] "Truly, fair uncle," said Aymeri to him,/"Now I love you more than any man alive."

[c] "But well you know that you committed a very great wrong,/ When you took from my uncle his land."

[d] Any man on earth, under the sky.

the other characters of the poems, for we find the Saracen king Arragon threatening to annihilate them all together:

> "Morz iert Guillaumes et a sa fin alez,
> Et ses neveuz a forches encroez."[a]
> (*Prise d'Orenge*, 605)

The idea of *lignage*, or kinship, is dominant in the family of Aymeri; it supports them in distress and spurs them on to greater effort; Vivien declares:

> "Se ge n'abat des mellors de lor geste,
> Ans ne fui niés Aymeri ne Guillelme."[b]
> (*Chevalerie Vivien*, 1886)

The nephews of Girart are constantly with him: *Ampres lui, sui neveu sunt souvant trestuit quatre*[c] (*Girart de Roussillon*, 1691). The nephews of Garin and Begon are in their company in all their battles:

> Qui donc veïst et Hernaut et Gerin
> Apres lor oncle en la presse venir![d]
> (*Mort Garin*, 791)

Garnier is surrounded by a troop of nephews in his combats:

> Li dus Garnier sot bien rengier ses compaignons;
> Girart ot, son neveu, le fiz au duc Othon,
> Renier, et Fouquerrant, et Garin de Mascon . . .[e]
> (*Aye d'Avignon*, 2113)

[a] "Guillaume will be killed and gone to his end, / And his nephews hanged upon forked branches."

[b] "If I strike not down some of the best of their race, / Never was I 'nephew' to Aymeri nor Guillaume."

[c] With him are often his nephews, all four.

[d] One ought then to have seen Hernaut and Gerin / After their uncle coming in the throng.

[e] Duke Garnier knew well how to arrange his companions; / He had Girart, his nephew, the son of Duke Otho, / Renier, and Fouquerant, and Garin de Mâcon.

Bernier, who has always been morally a supporter of his uncles, although his sense of allegiance has compelled him to serve his master Raoul, connects himself with them after his break with Raoul:

> "Raous mes sires nos vieut toz essilier,
> Et tos mes oncles de la terre chacier." [a]
> (*Raoul de Cambrai*, 1835)

The minor nephews of the Guillaume legend, when they are brought into the story, are made by the poet to exhibit the same spirit of concord as do Vivien and Bertrand; Gaudin and Savari set out to help Guillaume, whom they meet by the way:

> Gaudins li bruns les conduit, li marchis,
> Et avec lui fu li preuz Savaris:
> Cil furent niés Guillaume au fier vis.
> En France en vont socorre Looys.
> Quant s'entr'contrent a merveille lor vint,
> Il s'entrebesent, neveu sont et ami.[b]
> (*Couronnement Louis*, 1480)

Such closeness of association would naturally give the uncle greater authority than the father, and it is not surprising then that we find the uncle disposing of his nephew under various circumstances; for instance, it is Guillaume who decides in the family council that Vivien shall take his father's place in the Saracen prison, and in fact, Guillaume has the beau rôle to the end—it is he who restores Vivien to his family and points out to the father the son whom he thought lost.[78] According to the

[a] "Raoul my master wishes to destroy us all, / And drive all my uncles from their land."

[b] Gaudin the swarthy leads them, the marquis, / And with him was the valiant Savari; / These were nephews to Guillaume of the lofty countenance. / To France they go to succor Louis; / When they meet, splendidly it suited them; / They embrace, nephews are they and friends.

[78] *Enfances Vivien*, 337 (cited on page 67) and 4562. There are a number of instances where the uncle disposes of the hand of his

Willame, the uncle gives Renoart all the possessions of Vivien after the latter's death:

> Willame li donad set chastels en fez,
> & Ermentrud li dunent a moillier,
> & tote la tere Viuien le ber.[a]
> (*Cançun de Willame*, ed. Chiswick, 3498)

(*g*) *Association in War*

The Petit Larousse neatly defines an epic as a "poème de longue haleine sur un sujet héroïque;" heroic deeds are interpreted to mean martial deeds, for in this earlier stage of civilization the refinement of moral heroism is neglected to the advantage of deeds of prowess; so the modern reader has his mind attuned to a recital of "battle, murder, and sudden death," and although his sympathetic interest may not have been awakened, yet he is in a receptive mood towards the long descriptions of battles and combats to which all else in the *Chansons de Geste* is but a preliminary appetizer. The poet often beseeches his audience to listen patiently, for a *bone cançun* is to follow directly, meaning that he is about to take his hearers to the battle-field and point out to them every detail of the long and bloody fight. Thus we must expect to find our poet pursuing his uncle-and-nephew theme with a keener interest when he is treating of the companionship of his characters in war.

It is not easy to classify the poetic references to these rela-

[a] Willame gave him seven chateaux in fief, / And Ermentrud they give him to wife, / And all the land of Vivien the baron.

niece in marriage, and his authority in these cases seems to be undisputed; it takes only a word on the part of Guillaume when he bestows the hand of Aaliz upon Renoart, and he notifies rather than consults her father, King Louis, in the matter (*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 8164). Hardré rewards Ami for concealing his cowardice in battle by giving him his niece; Ami passes her on to Amile, who marries her at once (*Amis et Amiles*, 470).

tions as regards the association in war and the spiritual attitude of each pair of characters, many phases overlapping one another, but even the crudest grouping will serve to point out the different features of such contact. After being knighted, the next important step in the life of the nephew is to distinguish himself as a warrior; he may have already done so, thus winning his spurs, but in any case we see him as the inseparable companion of the uncle in our poetic narrative. Unlike the original Mentor, the uncle may not always be an impeccable guide and prudent counsellor, but he at least performs that office always with his nephew's interests at heart.

The earlier part of the *Chanson des Saisnes* contains many passages showing the watchful care of the Emperor over his nephew Baudoin, who accompanies him on the Saxon campaign and whose love adventures fill the poem from the moment of his first appearance, when:

> Karles tint an sa main .i. baston de sapin
> Et apela o soi son neveu Baudoin.[a]
> (*Saisnes*, L, 8)

Charlemagne forbids him to cross the Rune to make love to his enemy's wife, not because it is morally wrong, but because it is dangerous:

> "Biaus niés," dist l'empereres, "entendez mon talent:
> Je vueil faire seur vous .i. mien commandement,
> Qui est tez que je vueil trestout certainement
> Que plus ne passes Rune, car je le vous deffent;
> Et se plus i passez seur mon deveement,
> Tous soiés asseür d'avoir mon maltalent."[b]
> (*Saisnes*, LXXV, 1)

[a] Charles held in his hand a staff of fir, / And called to him his nephew Baudoin.

[b] "Fair nephew," said the Emperor, "hear my will: / I wish to put upon you a command of mine, / Which is that I desire above all, positively, / That you cross the Rune no more, for I forbid it you, / And if you cross again, against my prohibition, / Be fully assured of having my displeasure."

Baudoin is always with him, and when the attack upon the Saxons is planned, the Emperor assigns him a position first of all, one that will please him:

Son neveu Baudoin en apela premier:
"Biax niés," dist l'ampereres, "bien vos vuel aasier:
Androit le tré Sebile irez enuit gaitier,
Et seront an ta rote .xx.M. chevalier.
Bien sai que c'est li leus que vos avez plus chier."[a]
(*Saisnes*, XCIII, 2)

He is ever alert in his nephew's behalf, and when Baudoin gets into a serious quarrel with Berart, Charlemagne interferes and acts as peace-maker:

"Biax niés," dist l'ampereres, "laissiez vostre plaidier,
Que par celui Seignor que nos devons proier,
Mar direz a Berart qi li doie enuier."
Ensi fait l'ampereres les paroles laissier.[b]
(*Saisnes*, CXXV, 48)

When Charlemagne retires, leaving his nephew in authority over the conquered Saxons, he directs his further actions, giving him parting advice:

Nostre ampereres Karles son neveu molt chastie . . .
"Mès bien gardez, biax niés, folors ne vos sorpraigne" . . .
"Contenez vos ensi c'on n'an face parlance,
Que vostre lignage ne tornast a pesance." . . .[c]
(*Saisnes*, CCXIV–CCXVII)

[a] His nephew Baudoin he called first; / "Fair nephew," said the Emperor, "I wish indeed to content you; / Near the tent of Sebille you will go and watch tonight, / And in your troop will be twenty thousand knights. / Well I know that that is the place which you hold dearest."

[b] "Fair nephew," said the Emperor, "cease your dispute, / For by that Lord to whom we must pray, / In evil hour shall you say to Berart what must annoy him." / Thus the Emperor makes him cease his words.

[c] Our Emperor Charles advises his nephew much.... / "But take

Similarly, he advises Anseïs as to the best way to govern the fief which he gives him:

> Quant ot pensé, parmi les flans l'embrache;
> Puis li dist: "Niés, diex te croist barnage."[a]
> (*Anseïs de Cartage*, 100 ff.)

At Aspremont the Emperor gives Roland command of one of the five divisions of his army, then when he is compelled to leave him, he tearfully recommends him to the vigilance of Ogier:

> "Ha! Ogier, sire, tenez moi covenant
> De mon neveu por ce qu'a cuer d'enfant.
> A Damedieu et a toi le comant."
> Li rois le seigne, si s'en torne plorant.[b]
> (*Aspremont*, cited by L. Gautier, *Ep. Fran.*, III, 89)

The watchfulness of Guillaume over his favorite nephew Vivien does not avail to save him, but at the outset of the latter's career he anxiously warns him against going into the fight:

> "Vos estes jones, laissiés tels foletés" . . .
> "Niés," dist Guillelmes, "tant suis ge plus dolans,
> Car or sai bien ne vivrés longement;
> Ociront vos li Sarrasin pulant.
> Je en plorai et tuit vostre parent."[c]
> (*Chevalerie Vivien*, ed. Terracher, 29–46)

good heed, fair nephew, lest imprudence take you unawares." . . ./ "Restrain yourself, so that they may make no talk, / Lest for your family it should turn to sorrow."

[a] When he had meditated, he puts his arms about his waist; / Then said to him: "Nephew, may God increase your valor."

[b] "Ha! Ogier, Lord, make a compact with me, / About my nephew, because he has the heart of a child. / To the Lord God and to you I commend him." / The King blesses him, and turns away, weeping.

[c] "You are young, give up such follies." . . ./ "Nephew," said

Naimon acts as the guardian and counsellor of Ogier throughout the *Enfances Ogier;* the Emperor entrusts Ogier to his care, and he goes bond for him, and looks after him on the campaign on which he takes him:

> Fer ne chaienne ainc l'enfes n'i porta,
> K'au chastelain dux Namles l'arrea
> Et loiaument li encouvenença
> C'Ogiers de lui ne se departira.[a]
> (*Enfances Ogier*, 234)

Charlemagne recognizes the interest of the uncle in his nephew and the right that he may have for interceding on his behalf; if he does not get the father, for whom Ogier is hostage, he says:

> "En son despit feïsse trayner
> Ogier son fill et pendre et encroer,
> Sachiez de voir, n'en peüst eschaper,
> Mais pour son oncle le lairai ore ester,
> Le duc Namlon, c'on doit bien hounorer."[b]
> (*Enfances Ogier*, 531)

In the Provençal *Girart*, the nephews are so closely associated with the uncle that when the messenger Pierre announces to the Emperor the intention of Girart to keep on with the feud, his thoughts cannot help turning to the danger of the nephews; he says: "Girart gardera sa rancune (puisse Dieu protéger ses neveux et ses hommes) jusqu'à ce qu'il t'ait vaincu."[74]

Guillaume, "all the more sorrowful am I, / For now I know well you will not live long; / The filthy Saracens will slay you. / I shall weep, and all your relatives."

[a] Fetters nor chains the youth never bore. / For Duke Naimon placed him with the warden, / And faithfully he promised him / That Ogier shall not separate from him.

[b] "To his humiliation I would have Ogier / His son dragged and hanged and exposed; / Know truly, he could not escape, / But for his uncle I will let him be, / Duke Naimon, whom we must honor."

[74] *Girart de Roussillon*, traduction Meyer, p. 150, § 303.

(*h*) *Mutual Dependence*

During their association in war the mutual dependence of uncle and nephew is evident throughout; where one is, there is the other to be found, and each looks after the welfare of the other. This attitude of mutual helpfulness is recognized by the other characters, and the poet himself sometimes ventures the statement that it is a natural thing. A passage of the *Chanson de Roland* brings out nicely the extreme reliance of the Emperor on Roland; Marsile asks Ganelon if the Emperor is never going to weary of fighting, and Ganelon, thinking of the close bond between them, replies: *Ço n'iert tant cum vivet sis niés*[a] (*Roland,* 544); if his nephew were only out of the way, it would be a death-blow to the Emperor's pride and ambition, the loss of his right arm, as it were, and then Spain would be left in peace:

> "Carles verrat sun grant orgoill cadeir,
> N'avrat talent que jamais vus guerreit."[b]
> (*Roland,* 577)
>
> "Ki purreit faire que Rollanz i fust morz,
> Dunc perdreit Carles le destre braz de l' cors;
> Si remeindreient les merveilluses oz,
> N'asemblereit Carles si grant esforz;
> Jamais el' chief n'avrat curune d'or;
> Trestute Espaigne remeindreit en repos."[c]
> (*Roland,* 596)

More noticeable still is the degree to which Guillaume leans upon his nephew Bertrand, especially for moral support and

[a] That will not be, so long as his nephew lives.

[b] "Charles will see the fall of his great pride, / He will have no desire to wage war upon you more."

[c] "If anyone could manage that Roland should die there, / Then Charles would be losing the right arm of his body; / The marvellous armies would come to an end, / Charles would never assemble so great a force again; / Never will he have a golden crown upon his head; / All Spain would remain in peace."

encouragement; he takes care of Vivien, but Bertrand takes better care of Guillaume himself, and the uncle, seemingly unable to do without his sympathy, requires his assent or approval on all occasions, some of which are indeed trivial.[75] While talking with the porter of the monastery where Louis is confined, he attracts Bertrand's attention:

> Bertran apele: "Entendez, sire niés,
> Oïstes mès si bien parler portier?" [a]
> (*Couronnement Louis*, 1543; cf. 1587, 1634)

He is continually asking advice of Bertrand:

> Bertran apele: "Sire niés, entendez,
> Por amor Deu, quel conseill me donez?
> Li rois, mes sires, est touz deshéritez." [b]
> (*Couronnement*, 2650)
> "Biax niés," dist il, "conseill vos demandomes
> De cest traïtre, comment le destruiromes?"
> Ce dist Bertrans: "Que pensez vos, biaus oncles,
> Or li metons enz el chief tel corone,
> Dont la cervele li espande en la bouche." [c]
> (*Couronnement*, 1909)

When Bertrand advises his angry uncle to continue in the service of Louis, he follows the advice, as he does when Bertrand suggests that he had better ask the Emperor for Nîmes and other unconquerable cities as a fief:

[a] He calls Bertrand: "Listen, sir nephew, / Did you ever hear porter speak so well?"

[b] He calls Bertrand: "Sir nephew, listen; / For love of God, what advice do you give me? / The King, my master, is completely disinherited."

[c] "Fair nephew," said he, "we ask advice of you / About this traitor, how we shall destroy him." / Bertrand said: "What think you, fair uncle, / Now let us put upon his head a crown, / Out of which his brain may pour down into his mouth."

[75] Cf. the *Nerbonesi*, vol. II, p. 143, *E poi Beltramo si tomò a Guglielmo, che sanza lui non potea stare.*

"Vo droit seignor ne devez pas haster,
Ainz le devez servir et hennorer,
Contre toz homes garantir et tenser." [a]
(*Charroi de Nîmes*, 423)

"Vos dites voir, beau niés.
La léauté doit l'en toz jorz amer:
Dez le commande, qui tot a à jugier." [b]
(*Charroi*, 442)

"Niés," dit Guillaumes, "de bone heure fus nez,
Quar tot ausi l'avoie ge pensé,
Mès ge voloie avant a toi parler." [c]
(*Charroi*, 461)

Guillaume insists upon having Bertrand and Guielin with him on the Spanish expedition (*Charroi*, 596 ff.; 763). Once settled in Nîmes, he is affected by the languor of the spring, and calls Guielin and Bertand to confide in them, *ses .ij. neveus, que il pot amer tant* [d] (*Prise d'Orenge*, 84). No sooner has he reached Orange on his matrimonial quest than he is overcome by stage-fright and begins to feel the need of Bertrand's prompting, although he has two other nephews with him on the scene; at a loss what to do, he asks advice of Guielin, and the poet slyly offers us the unusual spectacle of the hardened warrior giving way to doubts and fears and meekly relying upon the encouragement of the youthful knight, his nephew:

"Tant par est riches li sires de céanz,
Que pléust Deu, qui forma tote gent,

[a] "Your rightful lord you must not provoke, / But rather must you serve and honor him, / Protect and defend him against all men."

[b] "You say truly, fair nephew, / Loyalty must one always cherish; / God commands it, who has judgment over all."

[c] "Nephew," said Guillaume, "in a good hour wert thou born, / For I too had thought of it, / But I wanted first to speak to thee."

[d] His two nephews, whom he loved so much.

Que i fust ore li palazins Bertrans
O tot .X.M. de François combatans!" [a]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 466)

"Oncle Guillaume," Guielins li respont,
Gentix homs, sire, vos querriez amor:
Vez Gloriete, le pales et la tor,
Quar demandez ou les dames en sont,
Bien vos poez engaigier por bricon."
Et dist li cuens: "Tu dis voir, valleton." [b]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 515)

"Niés Guielins, qu'alons nos atendant? . . .
Ne reverrons ne cosin ne parent." . . .
"Oncle Guillaume, vos parlez de néant." [c]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 905 ff.)

"Niés Guielins," dist il, "quel la ferons?
James en France, ce cuit, ne revenrons,
Ne ja neveu, parent ne beserons." . . .
"Oncle Guillaume, vos parlez en perdon" . . .
"Niés Guielin, comment le porrons fere?
Tuit somes mort et livré a damaige."
"Oncle Guillaume, vos parlez de folaige." [d]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 1030–1057)

[a] "So powerful is the lord of this place, / That I would to God, who created all men, / That the paladin Bertrand were here now / With ten thousand French warriors!"

[b] "Uncle Guillaume," Guielin replies, / "Gentle sir, you sought love; / See Gloriette, the palace and the tower; / Ask where the ladies are, / You can well engage as jester." / And the Count said: "Thou sayest truly, lad."

[c] "Nephew Guielin, what are we awaiting? . . . / We shall not see again either cousin or relative." . . . / "Uncle Guillaume, you talk in vain."

[d] "Nephew Guielin," said he, "what do we here? / Nevermore, I think, shall we return to France, / Nor ever embrace nephew or relative." . . . / "Uncle Guillaume, you speak in vain." . . . / "Nephew Guielin, how shall we manage? / We are all killed and delivered up to ruin." / "Uncle Guillaume, you speak in folly."

Guillaume takes Bertrand's advice to marry Orable without delay:

> Et dit Bertrans: "Qu'alez vos atarjant?
> Tenez li bien tot le suen convenant,
> Si l'espousez a joie liémant."
> "Niés," dist Guillaumes, "tost a vostre commant." [a]
> (*Prise d'Orenge*, 1858)

When Vivien, his favorite, perishes, it is Bertrand to whom he turns for comfort:

> Bertran ancontre, ces mos li a conteis,
> Anbedui plorent par fines amisteis.
> "Bias niés Bertrans, près de moi vos teneis,
> Tant con vos voi ne puis estre esgareis." [b]
> (*Chevalerie Vivien*, ed. Terracher, 1926)

The poet of *Foucon* represents Guillaume as being still dependent on Bertrand, and sighing: *Dex de Bertran mon neveu c'or n'ai ça* [c] (284, ed. Schultz-Gora), while Bertrand on his part still continues to advise his uncle and to direct his movements:

> "Mes il est biens que mes oncles remaigne
> Et si dui frere et li dux de Bretaigne." . . .
> "Oncle Guillaume," ce dit li cuens Bertranz,
> "Vos remandroiz et g'irai as anfanz." [d]
> (*Foucon*, ed. Schultz-Gora, 4184 ff.)

[a] And Bertrand says, "Why go you delaying? / Keep strictly agreement with her, / And marry her joyfully and gladly." / "Nephew", said Guillaume, "at your command!"

[b] He meets Bertrand, these words he related to him; / Both weep for perfect love. / "Fair nephew Bertrand, keep near me; / So long as I see you, I cannot lose my way."

[c] Oh, God! For my nephew Bertrand, whom I have not here now!

[d] "But it is well that my uncle remain, / And his two brothers and the Duke of Brittany." . . . / "Uncle Guillaume," says Count Bertrand, "You will remain and I will go to the youths."

The *marchande* of the *Enfances Vivien* asks advice of her husband's nephews, who are with her on her bartering trip, when she desires to pass Vivien off as her son (771). It is Aymeri the nephew of Girart, who brings him aid, and upon whom he relies:

> "Niés," dist Girars, "vos estes mes amis:
> Se ne puissiez, tos i fuisse honis. . . .
> Se tu ne fusse, je fusse mal baillis."[a]
> (*Girart de Vienne*, pp. 64, 72)

On behalf of his uncle, Aymeri gets possession of the queen at the siege of Vienne, while Roland, on behalf of his uncle the Emperor, rescues her (*Girart*, p. 73). When Ernaut is hard pressed by Raoul de Cambrai, he depends upon his nephew Rocoul for help:

> Fuit s'en Ernaus broichant a esperon;
> Raous l'enchauce qi cuer a de felon.
> Ernaus regarde contremont le sablon,
> Et voit Rocoul le nobile baron
> Qi tint la terre vers la val de Soisons.
> Niés fu Ernaut et cousins Berneçon.
> Avec lui vinrent .M. nobile baron.
> Ernaus le voit, vers lui broiche a bandon;
> Merci li crie por avoir garison.
> Ernaus c'escrie, poour ot de mourir:
> "Biaus niés Rocoul, bien me devez garir
> Envers Raoul qi ne me vieut guerpir,
> Ce m'a tolu dont devoie garir,
> Mon poing senestre a mon escu tenir;
> Or me manace de la teste tolir."
> Rocous l'oï, del sens quida issir:
> "Oncles," dist il, "ne vos chaut de fuïr;"

[a] "Nephew," said Girart, "you are my friend; / If you could not prevent it, I should be disgraced. . . . / If it were not for thee, I should be ill served."

Bataille ara Raous, n'i puet faillir,
Si fiere et dure con il porra soufrir." [a]
(*Raoul de Cambrai,* 2887)

The nephew is evidently considered an important asset in time of war, as being more reliable than the men of the rank and file, and more valuable even than the ordinary *nourri;* the poet of the Provençal *Girart* ascribes to Bertrand great influence and power on account of the possession of a large number of nephews: "Bertran avait vingt-cinq neveux, de grande valeur, tous fils de frère ou de soeur, aucun n'était d'un degré plus éloigné." [76]

(*i*) *Nephew as Successor or Heir*

The references to the disposal of the uncle's own property in favor of the nephew are not many, and there are no specific indications that the son is ever dispossessed in favor of the nephew, the retention of that particular phase of the régime of matriarchal principles seemingly not being a part of the survival. The inference to be drawn is that the legal practise of the times influenced the poet in this respect to the detriment of the coherence of the sentimental survival.

[a] Ernaut flees, digging in his spurs; / Raoul pursues him, who has the heart of a knave. / Ernaut looks up along the sandy plain, / And sees Rocoul, the noble baron / Who held the land about the valley of Soissons. / He was nephew to Ernaut and cousin to Berneçon. / With him came a thousand noble barons. / Ernaut sees him, spurs towards him impetuously; / Implores him to come to succor him. / Ernaut cries, he was afraid of being killed: / "Fair nephew Rocoul, you must indeed protect me / Against Raoul, who will not let me go. / He has taken from me that with which I was to protect myself, / My left hand, to hold my shield; / Now he threatens to deprive me of my head." / Rocoul heard him, he almost went out of his senses: / "Uncle," said he, "there is no need to flee; / Raoul shall have battle, he cannot fail, / As fierce and hard as he can endure."

[76] Traduction Meyer, p. 261, § 562.

As we have seen, Charlemagne makes large grants to his nephews, but Louis is the natural heir to the realm, and yet the Emperor seems to leave him his kingdom regretfully, knowing his unworthiness—he is a *malvais iretier*.[77] Professor Hart remarks: "Like Beowulf to Hygelac, Roland was sister's son to Charlemagne. The relation, obviously enough, was a close one, though in both cases that of own son was closer. It was Heardred, it will be remembered, who succeeded Hygelac, and of Louis Charles says to Aude: *Il est mes fils, tendrat mes marches grandes*[a] (*Roland*, 3716)."[78] The argument is not conclusive, however, that the son stands nearer than the nephew, for the evidence of the whole poem goes to show that the sentimental relation between uncle and nephew is much closer than that between father and son; Louis is not even mentioned before this passage, and Charles makes the statement that he is his heir only after the death of Roland, when he is trying to console Aude and to compensate her as best he can for the loss of her fiancé; so this unpremeditated exclamation of his must not outweigh the testimony of the entire poem. Then, too, there is the outburst of the Emperor in an earlier campaign, when he has been persuaded by Ganelon that his nephew Roland is dead: *Car jou ai perdu cel(s) ou ma couronne apent*[b] (*Fierabras*, 4467). The poet of the *Entrée en Espagne*, too, makes him say to Roland, who is about to combat Ferragus: "Si je vous perds, je vais rester tout seul, comme pauvre dame quand a perdu l'époux; doux ami, je n'ai plus de fils après ma mort."[79] So that on the whole the question of legal inheritance is disregarded by the poet, while he emphasizes the sentimental

[a] He is my son, he will hold my great estates.

[b] For I have lost him to whom my crown belongs.

[77] Cf. *Couronnement de Louis*, 50 ff.; Gautier, *Epopées Françaises*, III, 737.

[78] W. M. Hart, "Ballad and Epic," in *Harvard Stud. & Notes in Phil. & Lit.*, XI (1907), p. 231.

[79] Ms. fr. de Venise, XXI, f° 31 r°, cited by Gautier, *Ep. Fran.*, III, 141.

bestowal of property, and as will be seen, this sentimental aspect is merely a survival of what was once the legal method of disposal. If Charlemagne does not return from his long absence, the entire realm of France will continue in the hands of the temporary king, his sister's son Gui, who is the natural heir:

"Et se il ne revient, si aura l'erité;
Car nos ne volons mie Karlon deseriter." [a]
(*Gui de Bourgogne*, 224)

There is a reference in *Foucon* to a sword of Pepin's, which descended to a sister's son, and eventually came into the possession of Foucon:

"Se vers Orenges poons penre sejor,
Ge cuit prover mon vert bran de color,[80]
Qui fu Pepin lo maigne empereor,
Dom il occist Justamont en l'estor;
Apres sa mort l'ot unz fiz sa seror." [b]
(*Foucon*, ed. Schultz-Gora, 623)

King Gondrebuef holds the realm of Brittany for his nephew Anseïs:

Roi Gondrebuef truevent et sa maisnie,
Ki de Bretagne tenoit la seignorie;
Pour Anseïs avoit l'onor saisie,

[a] "And if he returns not, he will have the heritage; / For we do not wish to disinherit Charles."

[b] "If near Orange we can make our stand, / I expect to try my blade flashing green, / Which belonged to Pepin, the great emperor, / With which he slew Justamont in the combat; / After his death a son of his sister had it."

[80] Schultz-Gora reads *por voir*, with a comma before and after the phrase, but the Boulogne ms. has *prover*, which is certainly preferable.

Ses niés estoit, si l'aime sans boisdie.[a]
(*Anseïs de Cartage,* 8985)

Karaheu claims Rome, because it once belonged to his uncle:

"Qu'il vos laist Rome tenir vostre hérité,
Ce fu vostre uncle Costentin l'alosé."[b]
(*Chevalerie Ogier,* 1415)

Boniface asks the Emperor's permission to make his nephew Garin his heir; here, to be sure, the reason seems to be that he has no children:

"Vez ci Garin, qui est de mon linaje,
Filz Aymeri le hardi conte et saje,
N'ai filz ne fille qui ait mon eritaje.
Se il vos plest et il vient en corage
Que je li doigne ma terre et mon menaje?
Qu'il est mes niés, del mieuz de mon linaje."[c]
(*Narbonnais,* 3091)

The nephew of Aymer de Losengne inherits his uncle's land:

"D'Aymer est la perte recovrée,
Le bon vassal qui la vie a finée.
Cist est ses niés, fiz sa seror l'ainnée;
Bien doit tenir la terre et la contrée
Qui fu son oncle a la chiere menbrée."[d]
(*Aymeri de Narbonne,* 1881)

[a] King Gondrebuef they find and his household, / Who held lordship over Brittany; / For Anseïs he had seized the land, / His nephew was he, he loves him without deceit.

[b] "That he let you hold Rome, your heritage; / It was your uncle Constantine's, the honored."

[c] "See Garin here, who is of my lineage, / Son of Aymeri, the hardy count, the wise; / I have no son nor daughter who may have my heritage. / If it please you, and is your will / That I give him my land and my home? / For he is my nephew, of the best of my race."

[d] "Of Aymer is the loss replaced, / The good young noble whose life has ended. / This is his nephew, son of his sister the eldest born; / Indeed he must hold the land and the territory / That was his uncle's of the intelligent face."

Gui offers to protect his uncle's wife Guiborc and to rule the land after Willame's death:

> Quant l'ot Guillelmes, prist le chief a croller,
> Plurat des oeilz tendrement e suëf,
> L'enfant apelet, sil prist a acoler,
> Treis feiz le baiset, e puis li at mustré:
> "A la fei, niés, sagement as parlé.
> Cors as d'enfant, e raisun as de ber.
> Aprés ma mort tei seit mis fiez donez."[a]
> (*Willame*, ed. Suchier, 1476)

At the end of the poem Willame repeats his promise: *Aprés ma mort tien tot m'erité*[b] (1981). Girart du Frate, when about to start on the dangerous expedition to the gorge of Aspremont, bequeaths his property:

> Girart du Frate a la chiere membrée,
> Si tost com out sa terre deuisée,
> A ses neuez et a ses fiz donée . . .[c]
> (*Aspremont*, ed. Bekker, p. 2, col. 2)

(*j*) *Rôle of Uncle in the Blood-Feud*

Most conspicuous among all the attributes of the uncle is his position as avenger of the death of the nephew. In starting or in carrying on the blood-feud it is the uncle who plays the most important part; likewise, the prime duty of the nephew is to avenge the uncle's death, imprisonment, or defeat. The utmost vindictiveness characterizes this thirst for vengeance, only one

[a] When Guillaume hears him, he began to shake his head; / He wept tenderly and softly, / Calls the child and began to caress him; / Three times he kisses him and then points out to him: / "Truly, nephew; thou hast spoken wisely. / The body of a child hast thou, and the language of a baron. / After my death let my fief be given to thee."

[b] After my death hold all my heritage.

[c] Girart du Frate of the keen visage, / As soon as he had divided his land, / And given it to his nephews and his sons.

or two cases of lenience or of reconciliation being recorded in the French epic, and the moral obligation of the uncle in this respect is very strongly emphasized by the poet. Occasionally the uncle applies the principle of an eye for an eye in his demand of a nephew for a nephew, and sometimes, too, he must suffer for his nephew's crimes or shortcomings, if his enemy can lay hold upon him. The instances of vengeance threatened or taken are numerous; the principle and the language are about the same in each case. This and the question of inheritance are the most noticeable features of the epic which bear a resemblance to the commoner practises of Mother-right as we know them; if the blood-feud plays a larger part in the epic than inheritance does, it is because of the greater proportion generally given to war and battles; inheritance, like the other peaceful relations within the family, has less occasion to be introduced by the poet. While in primitive society the legal aspect of the relations between the two, i. e., inheritance, etc., was equally important with the ethical and sentimental relations, in the *Chanson de Geste* it is the latter aspect which predominates. Thus barbaric influence prevails to a large extent over that of organized society in its effect upon the French epic.

Thus Charlemagne prays to God for the power to avenge the death of Roland:

> "La tue amur me seit hoi en present.
> Par ta mercit, se tei plaist, me cunsent
> Que mun nevuld poisse vengier Rollant." [a]
> (*Chanson de Roland*, 3107)

And when his barons try to dissuade him, asking mercy for Ganelon, he is irritated at their attitude, and exclaims: *Vus estes mi felun* [b] (3814). In the Baligant episode he takes vengeance upon the Saracens, while from verse 3805 to the end

[a] "May thy love be present with me today. / By thy mercy, if it pleaseth thee, grant / That I may avenge my nephew Roland."

[b] You are my knaves.

of the poem he is engaged in his work of punishing Ganelon. In *Anseïs*, when he orders the execution of Marsile, it is because the thought of Roland comes to his mind and induces him to make his vengeance complete, and he cries: *Vengier vaurrai mon cier neveu Rollant*[a] (10198).

He takes vengeance upon the guilty Saxons for the death of Baudoin: *La mort de son neveu vange molt fieremant*[b] (*Saisnes*, CCLXII, 5). He wants to wreak vengeance upon Ogier, *qui son neveu li a ochis Loihier*[c] (*Chevalerie Ogier*, 4318). He starts the feud with Renaut de Montauban because:

> Renaus li filz Aimon qui tant ot de bontez
> Occit puis Bertolai d'un eschac pointuré,
> Le neveu Karlemaine, dunt li rois fu irez.[d]
> (*Vivien de Monbranc*, 19)

He vows: *Jamais ne finerai, s'es aurai vergondés*[e] (*Renaut*, p. 73, 21); the situation is summed up in the words of Renaut:

> "Il m'ot ocis mon honcle, dont je fui mult irés,
> Le duc Buef d'Aigremont ki tant ot de bonté . . .
> Bertolai en feri .i. cop desmesuré,
> .I. neveu Karlemaine que mult avoit amé. . . .
> Adonc me prist li rois de France a regarder,
> Qu'il me voloit ocirre et les membres coper.
> Mes linages nel pot sofrire ne endurer. . . .
> La me fist a mon pere guerpir et desfier,
> Que jamais entor lui ne prendroie .i. disner."[f]
> (*Renaut de Montauban*, p. 227)

[a] I want to avenge my dear nephew Roland.

[b] The death of his nephew he avenges very fiercely.

[c] Who slew his nephew Loihier.

[d] Renaut, the son of Aymon, who so much goodness had, / Slew Bertolai then with a painted chessboard, / The nephew of Charlemagne, at which the King was enraged.

[e] Never shall I stop, till I have covered them with dishonor.

[f] "He slew my uncle, at which I was sore angry, / Duke Bovon d'Aigremont who had so much goodness." . . . / I struck Bertolaï

Girart de Roussillon threatens Ogier for the death of his nephew Ponçon de Clarvent:

"Ogiers de Danemarche, li cors Deu te cravant,
Tu as mort mon neveu que je amoie tant.
Se je puis esploitier, tu en seras dolant." [a]
(*Renaut de Montauban*, p. 32, 10)

Bovon threatens revenge when his nephew Coine is killed by the Emperor:

Atant parti des rens dus Bueves l'alossé,
Et escrie: "Aigremont! Karles ou ies alé?
Mon neveu m'as ocis, que tant avoie amé.
Jamais ne serai lies, si l'auras comparé." [b]
(*Renaut*, p. 34, 35)

Wedon de Vermandois declares that if the family of Herbert slay Raoul, his uncle King Louis will avenge him:

"Niés est le roi qi France a a baillier:
Se l'ocions, par no grant encombrier,
Ja l'enpereres mais ne nos avra chier:
Toutes nos terres nos fera essilier;
Et, s'il nos puet ne tenir ne baillier,

a furious blow, / A nephew of Charlemagne, whom he loved much." . . . / "Then the King of France began to look at me, / As if he wished to slay me and dismember me. / My race could not endure nor suffer him." . . . / There he made me to be forsaken and repudiated by my father, / So that nevermore shall I take dinner with him!"

[a] "Ogier of Denmark, may God annihilate thee; / Thou hast killed my nephew whom I loved so much. / If I can succeed, thou shalt be sorry for it."

[b] Straightway started Duke Bovon the honored from the ranks, / And cries: "Aigremont! Charles, where hast gone? / My nephew thou hast slain, whom I loved so much. / Never shall I be joyful, till thou shalt have paid for it."

Il nos fera toz les menbres tranchier." [a]
(*Raoul de Cambrai*, 2105)

Ernaut de Douai reproaches Raoul:

"Par Dieu, Raous, jamais ne t'amerai
De ci qe mort et recreant t'avrai.
Tu m'as ocis mon neveu Bertolai,
Et Richerin qe durement amai,
Et tant des autres qe nes recoverai." [b]
(*Raoul*, 2786)

Guerri vows vengeance over the body of Raoul:

Son neveu trueve, s'en fu en grant esmai.
Il le regrete si con je vos dirai:
"Biax niés," dist il, "por vos grant dolor ai.
Qi vos a mort jamais ne l'amerai,
Pais ne acorde ne trives n'en prendrai
Desq'a cele eure qe toz mors les arai;
Pendus as forches toz les essillerai." [c]
(*Raoul*, 3166)

"Mi anemi sont ci devant voiant:
Celui m'ont mort qe je amoie tant:

[a] "He is nephew to the king who has France to govern; / If we slay him, to our great injury, / The Emperor will nevermore hold us dear; / All our lands he will have laid waste; / And if he can seize or hold us, / He will have all our limbs hewn off."

[b] "By Heaven, Raoul, nevermore will I love thee, / Until I have thee conquered and dead. / Thou hast slain my nephew Bertolai, / And Richerin whom I loved deeply, / And so many others that I shall not replace them."

[c] His nephew he finds, and fell into great dismay. / He laments him as I shall tell you: / "Fair nephew," said he, "for you I have great grief. / Who has slain thee I shall never love, / Peace nor compact nor truce shall I accept / Until that hour when I shall have them all dead; / Hanged on the gibbet I shall destroy them all."

Se je nel venge, taing moi a recreant." [a]
(*Raoul*, 3254)

"Se ne li trais le foie et le poumon,
Je ne me pris vaillant .j. esperon." [b]
(*Raoul*, 3187)

Raoul's mother comes to court and upbraids the king for letting Bernier even eat at his table after killing his nephew; if she were a man, she would show him before sunset with a sword:

"Q'a tort iés roi, bien le pues afichier,
Qant celui laises a ta table mengier
Qi ton neveu fist les menbres trenchier." [c]
(*Raoul*, 5230)

Guerri, too, tries to induce the King to perform his duty and punish the murderer of Raoul:

"De vo neveu fist l'arme departir;
Je me mervel comment le pues soufrir
Qe ne li fais toz les menbres tolir,
Ou pendre as forches, ou a honte morir." [d]
(*Raoul*, 4882)

In the ms. of *Girbert de Mets*, Louis really does take vengeance on the slayer of Raoul (*Raoul*, Appendix, 657). In the legend of Auberi, we find him fearing to go to France, dreading the vengeance of the king for the loss of his nephews:

[a] "My enemies are here before me visible; / Him they have killed whom I loved so much; / If I do not avenge him, hold me cowardly."

[b] "If I do not tear out his liver and his lungs, / I do not value myself as worth a spur."

[c] "That wrongfully thou art king, well thou canst affirm, / When thou lettest him eat at thy table / Who had thy nephew's limbs cut off."

[d] "He caused your nephew's soul to depart; / I wonder how thou canst endure / Not to deprive him of all his limbs, / Or hang him on the gibbet, or put him to death disgracefully."

"Se uois en France, la serai ie ocis,
Car trop me het li rois de Saint Denis;
Si neueu erent cil dui que i'ai ocis." [a]
(*Auberi*, ed. Tarbé, p. 17)

Early in the career of Vivien, we find his uncle Guillaume swearing to take vengeance if any ill befall him:

"Nies," dist Guillaume, "Jesu te soit garant;
Mais par l'apostre que quierent peneant,
Se tu i meurs por toi en mora tant
De celle gent qui Deu n'aiment nient
Que nes menroient .iii.c. cher charroient."
Qant ot ce dit do cuer vait sospirant.[b]
(*Enfances Vivien*, 359)

In the *Chevalerie Vivien*, when the ill-starred hero is mortally wounded, Guillaume promises to avenge him: *Si m'eïst Dex, molt bien vengiés sereis* [c] (1910). The pagans seem to expect Guillaume to take vengeance after the death of his nephew, for Desramé, after gloating over the vengeance he himself has taken on Guillaume for the death of his own nephew Aenré, taunts him and dares him to do his duty:

"Perdu avés Viviën le vaillant . . .
Cuvert, traïtres! Ja l'amiés vous tant.
Vien, si le venge a ton acerin brant!" [d]
(*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 5931 ff.)

[a] "If I go to France, I shall be slain there, / For the King of Saint Denis hates me much; / His nephews were those two whom I slew".

[b] "Nephew," said Guillaume, "may Jesus be thy protector; / But by the Apostle whom penitents seek, / If thou diest, for thee shall die so many / Of that race who love not God at all, / That three hundred removal carts would not bear them away." / When he had said this, he goes sighing from his heart.

[c] So may God help me, full well shall you be avenged.

[d] "You have destroyed Vivien the valiant. / Treacherous wretch, you loved him so. / Come thou, and avenge him with thy steel blade."

The main theme of the poem of *Foucon* concerns the endeavor of the hero to obtain his revenge upon the slayers of his uncle Vivien. Likewise much of the poem of *Raoul* and other *Chansons* in addition to the many passages in which the intention to take vengeance is openly announced, make this an important feature of the story.

(*k*) *Rôle of Nephew in the Blood-Feud*

In the matter of vengeance, the solidarity between uncle and nephew is complete, for it is the duty of each to start the blood-feud for the death of the other. In *Raoul de Cambrai,* the child Gautier looks on the dead body of Raoul with emotion, and vows vengeance; the quarrel rests until he has reached an age to bear arms, whereupon Raoul's mother summons him and stirs his recollections; he refuses to make peace with Bernier, who offers a *composition,* or indemnity:

> " Oncles," dist il, " tos ai duel acointié.
> Qi de nos .ij. a parti l'amistié
> Ne l'amerai si l'arai essilié,
> Ars ou destruit ou del regne chacié. . . .
> Se Dex se done q'aie tant de durée
> Qe je eüse la ventaille fermée,
> L'iaume lacié, enpoigne l'espée,
> Ne seroit pas si en pais la contrée.
> La vostre mort seroit chier comparée." [a]
> (*Raoul,* 3614, 3641)

> Une grant piece covint puis detrier
> Ceste grant guerre dont m'oés ci plaidier;
> Mais Gauteles la refist commencier.

[a] "Uncle," said he, "early have I learned to know sorrow. / The one who has ended the friendship of us two, / Never shall I love him till I shall have exterminated him, / Burned or destroyed or driven him from the realm." . . . "If God grants that I may last so long / Until I should have the vental closed, / The helmet laced, the sword in hand, / The region would not be so at peace. / Your death would be dearly redeemed."

Tantost com pot monter sor son destrier,
Porter les armes, son escu manoier,
Molt se pena de son oncle vengier.[a]
(*Raoul*, 3732)

"Biax niés," dist ele, "or sai de verité
Raoul vostre oncle aveiz tout oublié,
Son vaselaige et sa nobilité."[b]
(*Raoul*, 3752)

"Qant ces niés estes, a moi vos apaiés;
Prenés l'amende, se faire le dengniés.
Vostre hom serai, de vos tenrai mes fiés."[c]
(*Raoul*, 4006)

The poem of *Foucon* hinges largely upon the feud undertaken to avenge the death of Vivien by his nephew Foucon, who bids his mother prepare letters summoning the aid of the entire family, and enunciates the principle that *ains venge niés que frere:*

"Mais fai escrivre e si fai seialx faire,
Ses envoiex a la gent de vostre aire,
C'or vos secorent, que bien lo devez faire;
Toz jors l'oi dire: ainz venge niés que fraire."[d]
(*Foucon*, ed. Schultz-Gora, 534)

[a] A long time it was necessary then to defer / This great war which you hear me hear relate; / But Gautier caused it to begin again. / As soon as he could mount his steed, / Bear arms, handle his shield, / He strove much to avenge his uncle.

[b] "Fair nephew," said she, "now I know in truth / Raoul your uncle you have quite forgotten, / His courage and his nobility."

[c] "If you are his nephew, make peace with me. / Take the reparation, if you deign so to do. / I will be your man, and hold my fiefs from you."

[d] "But have letters written and sealed, / And send them to the people of your race, / That they aid you now, for truly you must do so; / Always I hear said: rather does nephew than brother take vengeance."

Foucon strikes Tibaut and almost kills him, and the poet remarks:

> Se ne tornast en son poing la jostise,
> De Vivïen fust la venjance prise.[a]
> (*Foucon*, 1712)

And Foucon bears in mind throughout the poem the object for which the war is undertaken, for he exclaims: *La mort mon oncle ne l'ai mie oblïee*[b] (7426).

The poem of *Renaut de Montauban* is filled with recriminations and threats of vengeance on the part of uncle or nephew: Renaut demands vengeance for the death of his uncle Bovon, and kills the Emperor's nephew Bertolai out of revenge, thus renewing the feud which fills the rest of the book:

> "Mais de la mort mon oncle li parlemens sera,
> Que feïstes ocirre, dont malement vos va.
> De lui vos demant droit par cel qui nos cria.
> Mi honcle et li miens peres s'amainerent pieça;
> Mais endroit moi, dans rois, nel creanterai ja."[c]
> (*Renaut*, p. 51, 37)

The hatred between Renaut and Foucon de Morillon is mutual, and for a similar reason in each case:

> Fouque de Moreillon, que Renaus haoit si;
> L'autre an ocist son oncle, au branc d'acier forbi.[d]
> (*Renaut*, p. 62, 1)

[a] If the judgment had not turned in his hand, / Vengeance for Vivien would have been taken.

[b] The death of my uncle have I not forgotten.

[c] "But the talk will be of the death of my uncle, / Whom you had slain, wherefore it goes ill with you. / For him I demand satisfaction of you, by Him who created us. / My uncles and my father became reconciled long ago; / But as for me, Sir King, I will not grant it."

[d] Foucon de Morillon, whom Renaut hated so; / Last year he slew his uncle with his polished blade of steel.

"Seignor, franc chevalier, mult doi haïr Renaut.
A grant tort m'a ocis mon honcle Bertolai." [a]
(*Renaut*, p. 164, 30)

Maugis renews the anger of Renaut by reminding him of the death of his uncle Bovon: *Renaus ce fu vostre oncle* (p. 218, 16). Rispeu threatens Renaut's brother Richart, who is a captive in the hands of the enemy:

"La mort Foucon, mon honcle, vos ferai comparer,
Que Renaus m'a ocis sos Balençon, as gués." [b]
(*Renaut*, p. 275, 31)

Gontier strikes and upbraids Gormond for killing his uncle Hugon, but it is King Louis who completes the vengeance:

Al rei Gormund brochant en vient,
Sil fiert sur sun helme vergie.[c]
(*Gormont et Isembard*, 341)

The murder of Begon, brother of Garin, arouses his nephews; the *bon abé Liétri* threatens to tear off his clerical robe and punish the murderer:

"Or me verrez de moniage issir,
Le blanc haubert endosser et vestir." [d]
(*Garin*, II, 250)

The young Rigaut stirs up the family to vengeance, announcing the death first to the *franche enpéreris*, his aunt, and to his uncle Hernaïs, riding first to Paris, then to Orleans, and lingering only long enough to tell his story, then on to Blaives:

[a] "My lords, noble knights, I must hate Renaut deeply; / Wrongfully he slew my uncle Bertolai."

[b] "The death of Foucon, my uncle, I shall make you atone for, / Whom Renaut slew near Balençon, at the ford."

[c] To King Gormond spurring he comes, / And strikes him upon his carven helm.

[d] "Now you will see me leave my monkhood, / Clothe and garb me in the white hauberk."

"Oncles," dist il, "male nouvelle a ci!
Qui vous a mors il n'est pas mes amins."[a]
(*Garin*, II, 254)

Garsion plans to avenge the death of his uncle Gui:

Et Garsïons, ki les ceviaus ot blois,
Ki pour Guion, son oncle, fu destrois,
Vengier le cuide, anchois ke past li mois.[b]
(*Anseïs de Cartage*, 10094)

Richart swears vengeance upon the Emperor:

"Dame," ce dist Richart, "ne seroit pas reison.
Kalles ocist mon oncle par mortel traïson,
En sauf conduit l'ocist, si com bien le savon.
James ne l'ameroi, foi que nos vous devon.
Se Diex nos donne vie encor nos vengeron."[c]
(*Vivien de Monbranc*, p. 57)

Otinel, during a combat with Roland, calls for vengeance: *la mort de mon oncle Fernagu te demant* (*Otinel*, 420). Garnier, instead of taking vengeance for the death of his uncle, requires allegiance of his murderers:

"Vos et vostre lingnage océistes Buevon,
Mon oncle debonaire, quant venoit d'Aigremont,
Et vos estez mi homme por la mort au baron.
Qui le me reprovez, de droit vos en semon."[d]
(*Aye d'Avignon*, 166)

[a] "Uncle," said he, "bad news is here! / He who killed you is no friend of mine."

[b] And Garsion, the blond-haired, / Who for Gui, his uncle, was distressed, / He thinks to avenge him ere the month be past.

[c] "Lady," said Richart, "that would not be right. / Charles slew my uncle in mortal treason. / In safe conduct he slew him, as well we know. / Nevermore shall I love him, by the faith we owe you. / If God gives us life, we shall still take vengeance."

[d] "You and your lineage slew Bovon, / My gentle uncle, when he was coming from Aigremont, / And you are my men by the death of the baron; / You who reproach me for it, rightfully I summon you."

In *Anseïs de Mes,* we find a nephew introduced apparently for the sole purpose of taking vengeance; Anseïs kills Gillemer, whose nephew Ponçon immediately avenges him by slaying Anseïs:

> Mort le trebuce, qui qu'en poist ne cui non.
> Dex, com en poise .I. sien neveut Ponçon![a]
> (*Anseïs de Mes,* 464, 18)

There are occasional instances of a feud being carried on for injuries or insults offered to the uncle or the nephew, and in such cases we sometimes find a nephew who is not important in any other connection taking up the defense of his uncle, thus seemingly being introduced into the story for this particular purpose, although the great majority of instances of vengeance occur at the hand of uncles or nephews who are an integral part of the story. Aymeri precipitates a war between Girart de Vienne and Charlemagne by telling his uncle Girart of the trick played upon him by the Empress, who had caused him to kiss her foot instead of that of the Emperor in doing homage; Aymeri attempts to wreak a summary vengeance upon the lady by attacking her with a knife, but is prevented, and reports the affair to his relatives at Vienne, after declaring:

> "Molt est proudom Dam Girart le guerrier;
> De duel morai, se je ne l' puis vangier."[b]
> (*Girart de Vienne,* p. 52)

Gascelin kills Lambert for persecuting his uncle Auberi; Lambert's nephew Hélinant demands vengeance of Pepin, and the two nephews fight in single combat to decide which is in the right (*Auberi,* ed. Tarbé, p. 124 ff.). Gautier, who has captured the Sultan, threatens to kill him to avenge the captivity of his uncle Ogier, whereupon the former offers to purchase indemnity by giving him money wherewith to ransom Ogier:

[a] He strikes him dead, whether it may grieve anyone or not. / Heavens! How it grieves his nephew Ponçon!

[b] "Brave and honorable is Sir Girart the warrior; / I shall die of grief, if I cannot avenge him."

"Poureoi alas Ogier emprisonnant,
Le plus prodonme de ce siècle vivant?
Or te ferai ja pendre pour .I. tant;
Si en sera vengié li dux puissant." . . .
"Et si raurez votre chier oncle Ogier,
Et Moysant sain et sauf et entier. . . .
Et vous rendrai Ogier qui tant est ber,
Votre chier oncle que tant poez amer." [a]
(*Deliverance Ogier*, 65, 88, 107)

The Count of Bourges takes up the defense of his uncle Elie, who has been driven from his estates by the King:

Le signor de Boorghes o le vis cler
Qui guerroie le roi par grant fierté
Por chou qu'il a lor oncle desireté,
Elie le franc duc qui tant fu ber.[b]
(*Aiol*, 1398)

The nephew frequently upholds his uncle's honor by defending his cause in single combat, being selected as champion and engaging in the fight with that purpose in mind. The nephew is sometimes made to atone for the uncle's crimes, or a threat to that end is made, the moral effect of which is to deter the uncle from committing some deed of violence that he has in mind, on account of the ultimate effect it will have upon his nephew's fate. Makaire's nephew Gerart and his friends try to convince him that he had best not kill Aiol, whom he has in his power, because the King has the flower of their rela-

[a] "Why goest thou imprisoning Ogier, / The most worthy knight living in this world? / Now I shall have thee hanged for that; / And the powerful duke will be avenged." . . . / "And you will have again your dear uncle Ogier, / And Moysant safe and sound and whole." . . . / "And I will restore to you Ogier the distinguished, / Your dear uncle whom you love so much."

[b] The lord of Bourges, fair of face, / Who is warring with the King so haughtily, / Because he has disinherited their uncle, / Elie, the noble duke, the distinguished.

tives and will surely wreak his vengeance upon them for the death of his sister's son:

> " Car li rois a la fors de nos millors amis,
> Et oncles et parens et neveus et cousins:
> S'or ochiés Aiol, ja nes reverons vis." [a]
> (*Aiol*, 8755; cf. 9165)

When Aymeri sees his son Guibelin nailed to the cross he sends word that one of his own captives, the Emir's favorite nephew, shall suffer for it, and the uncle is thereby induced to show mercy to his victim:

> " Se ne me ranz Guibelin an santé,
> Ja sera mort le neveu l'amiré." . . .
> . . . Clargis de Valplenier,
> Desor toz homes l'avoit l'amirant chier;
> Ses niés estoit . . .
> . . . filz sa seror l'ainnée.[b]
> (*Narbonnais*, 5292, 5366, 5668, 6518)

Corsolt, the nephew of Galafré, is chosen as combattant against Guillaume, and the Saracen king offers his sons as hostages; these passages afford an interesting comparison of the relative practical value of son and nephew: the hope of the Saracen is fixed upon his nephew, while the sons have only a passive part in the little drama (*Couronnement Louis*, 486 ff., 620 ff.). The duel between Roland and Oliver is on account of their respective uncles, whose reputation each engages to defend (*Girart de Vienne*, pp. 103 ff., 133 ff.). Girart de Rivier, *niez Garnier et de sa seror nez*, offers to defend his uncle against the charge of treason, but Garnier prefers to fight for himself (*Aye d'Avignon*, 296 ff.).

[a] "For the King has out there some of our best friends, / And uncles and relatives and nephews and cousins; / If now you slay Aiol, we shall ne'er see them again alive."

[b] "If thou dost not restore Guibelin to me unharmed, / The nephew of the Emir shall be put to death." . . . / Clargis de Valplenier, / Above all men the Emir held him dear. . . . / His nephew was he, / Son of his sister, the eldest born.

(*l*) *Claims of Nephew*

The allusions are many to the claims and rights of the nephew, the poet's own statements confirming the words of the characters themselves. The nephew calls upon his uncle for assistance in time of danger, and is sure of its being granted, for such is the duty of the uncle; the uncle acts contrary to the claims of relationship when he arbitrarily sends the nephew into danger; it is his duty to love his nephew, to give him power, to avenge him. We have seen how these various features are carried out by the individuals of the *Chansons de Geste,* now it remains to note that they were the very requirements of the relationship itself. The poet both in his own person and in that of the characters frequently voices opinions as to the ethical significance of this relationship; for purposes of investigation, his dogmatic utterances are more important than his application of them in the course of the narrative. His conception as to the duties of the uncle towards the nephew and the claims of the latter, his uncompromising belief in the fundamental harmony of this relationship, his consistent proclamation of the rights of each party, constitute a tradition that must have had its roots far back in the life of the people—a root that in the poet's own time must still have supplied considerable nourishment to the branches of the 'family tree.'

By virtue of the relationship the uncle should love and cherish the nephew; he who does not is a knave:

> "& Deus dist Willame vus me uolez aider;
> Fel seit li uncles qui bon nevov nad cher."[a]
> (*Cançun de Willame,* ed. Chiswick, 2549)

The child Gautier, looking upon the body of his uncle Raoul, thus apostrophizes the murderer Bernier:

[a] "Ah, God!" said Willame, "you wish to aid me; / Be the uncle a knave who holds not a good nephew dear."

"Cuivers bastars, con tu m'as fait irié!
Se m'as tolu dont devoie estre aidié." [a]
(*Raoul de Cambrai*, 3618)

Berart chides the Emperor when he becomes ruffled at the pranks of his nephew Baudoin:

"Vos estes d'un lignage andui estrait et né,
N'avé fors lui neveu: tanez le an cherté." [b]
(*Chanson des Saisnes*, CXLI*, 33)

Helissant tells Queen Sibille who Baudoin is:

"C'est li niés Karlemaine, tres bien l'os aflier,
De sa seror germaine, molt le doi[t] avoir chier.
Ses freres fu Rollanz, li compainz Ollivier;
Por le meillor de France n'estuet cestu changier." [c]
(*Saisnes*, LXVII, 29)

Renaut's friends urge King Yon not to betray him to Charlemagne, for his sons are Yon's nephews, whom he must cherish:

"Vo sereur li donastes a moillier et a per,
Renaus en a .ii. fils que mult devés amer." [d]
(*Renaut de Montauban*, p. 157, 15)

Henri d'Ostenne ought to love his nephew Auberi, but does not:

L'enfant deüst amer,
S'il fust preudoms, et ses honnors garder:

[a] "Baseborn wretch, how thou hast angered me! / Thou hast taken him from me by whom I was to be aided."

[b] "You are both of one lineage descended and born; / You have no nephew save him: hold him dear."

[c] "He is the nephew of Charlemagne, well I dare affirm it, / By his sister; very dear must he hold him. / His brother was Roland, the companion of Oliver; / For the best in France there is no need to exchange him."

[d] "Your sister you gave him to wife and as peer; / Renaut has two sons by her, whom you must love."

Mès il le het de la teste couper.[a]
(*Auberi*, ed. Tarbé, p. 5)

Here we have the unusual spectacle of the wicked uncle, common enough in the history of the Merovingian period, but so infrequent in the French epic that it can be dismissed with a brief reference. Such cases doubtless existed often enough in mediaeval France, but they do not seem to have appealed to the poets as material for epic use. Other branches of literature utilize the theme more often; for instance, the wicked uncle is frequently found in English popular literature.[81] The very treatment of the subject shows that it was foreign to the general conception of the uncle; the poet of *Auberi* makes this plain when he remarks:

Or ne sai je la ou se peut fier
Quant l'oncle velt le neveu afoler![b]
(*Auberi*, ed. Tarbé, p. 6)

This is said in connection with the harsh treatment which Auberi receives at the hands of his father's brother Henri. Odon, likewise, is a wicked uncle to him, plotting to kill him at the moment when he pretends to be most fond of him; Auberi cannot believe this when he is informed of it, for Odon is his maternal uncle, and as such cannot fail him, he thinks.[82] After his speedy disillusionment, Auberi refers to these two uncles as *mes mortex anemis*.[83] Another Odon, the uncle of Huon de Bordeaux, receives his nephew very kindly, but plots his murder, and is finally killed by Huon:

[a] He ought to have loved the child, / If he had been a man of honor, and to have protected his lands, / But he hates him enough to cut off his head.

[b] Now I know not where one can put trust, / When the uncle wishes to injure the nephew!

[81] Cf. F. B. Gummere, 'The Sister's Son,' in the *Furnivall Miscellany*.

[82] *Auberi*, ed. Tarbé, p. 17, cited on page 71.

[83] *Auberi*, ed. Tobler, p. 104, 17.

Cist maus traïstres a moult le sens dervé:
C'est fix son frere qu'il veut la jus tuer.[a]
(*Huon de Bordeaux*, 4311)

King Louis, while not intentionally a bad uncle, is accused of causing the whole war between Raoul and the Vermandois by giving away his nephew's rightful inheritance:

Rois Loeys fist le jor grant folaige
Qi son neveu toli son eritaige. . . .

"Et vos, fox rois, on vos en doit blasmer:
Vos niés est l'enfes, nel deüssiés penser,
Ne sa grant terre vers autrui delivrer." . . .

"Drois empereres, Dex te doinst encombrier!
Car ceste guere feïs tu commencier,
Raoul mon oncle ocire et detranchier."[b]
(*Raoul de Cambrai*, 135, 304, 5142)

The Emperor Alexis and his nephew Tatice (Tatixos) have a quarrel, and the nephew complains that the former has not performed his duty towards him:

Quant Estatins oï que il fin n'i metra,
De son oncle est partis que il gaires n'ama . . .

. . . "Mon oncle traï m'a,
Li cuivers empereres qui sa foi menti a.
Dame Diex le maudie qui le mont estora."[c]
(*Chanson d'Antioche*, II, 471, 477)

[a] This vile traitor has lost his senses; / It is his brother's son whom he wishes to kill yonder.

[b] King Louis committed that day a great folly, / Who took from his nephew his heritage. . . . / "And you, mad King, one must blame you for it; / This youth is your nephew; you ought not to have thought it, / Nor to have delivered his broad lands to another." / "Rightful Emperor, may God give you ill! / For thou didst cause this war to begin, / And Raoul my uncle to be slain and cut to pieces."

[c] When Tatice heard that he will not put an end to it, / He left

The nephew has a right to the uncle's favor and preference; Makaire is angry with King Louis because of favors shown to Aiol, whom he thinks a stranger; he bitterly exclaims:

> "Or sont li avolé miex en vo court
> Que ne sont vo neveu ne li millor." [a]
> (*Aiol*, 4189)

Raoul asks the King for a fief, because, he says: *Vostre niés sui, ne me doi meserrer* [b] (*Raoul de Cambrai*, 838). The uncle will submit to liberties taken by the nephew; otherwise Gui de Bourgogne would not dare to take charge of the kingdom in the absence of the Emperor:

> "Se revient l'emperere ariere en son rené
> Et il trueve celui que l'aions coroné,
> Il ne l'ocira mie, de son linage est né." . . .
>
> "Se Dex m'aït," se dist Karlemaine au vis fier,
> "S'il ne fust mes parens mes cousins ou mes niéz,
> Il ne l'osast panser, por les membres tranchier,
> Ne li enfant de France ne l'éussent laissié
> Que ja corone d'or éust mis sor son chief." [c]
> (*Gui de Bourgogne*, 221, 3158)

The uncle must not fail his nephew in time of need; Guerri, the uncle of Raoul, declares:

his uncle, whom he loved not much. . . ./"My uncle has betrayed me,/ The base emperor who has belied his pledge./ May the Lord God curse him, who established the world."

[a] "Now are strangers better off at your court/ Than are your nephews or the best."

[b] Your nephew am I, I cannot be mistaken.

[c] "If the Emperor comes back to his kingdom,/ And finds him whom we have crowned,/ He will not slay him, of his lineage he is born." . . ./"So help me God," said Charlemagne of the proud visage,/"If he were not my relative, my cousin or my nephew,/ He would not have dared think it, at the risk of his limbs,/ Nor would the youth of France have allowed/ That he should ever have put crown of gold upon his head."

"Ains me lairoie toz les membres colper
Mon neveu faille tant com puisse durer." [a]
(*Raoul de Cambrai*, 317)

Gautier, the grand-nephew of the Emperor, proclaims his rights, saying that Louis ought not to show any mercy or favor to Gautier's enemy Bernier:

"Drois empereres," dist il, "grant tort aveis.
Je sui vos niés, faillir ne me deveiz." [b]
(*Raoul de Cambrai*, 5438)

When the Saracens attack Narbonne in the absence of Aymeri, it is suggested that he shall apply to his uncle Girart for help:

"Proierai lui, se de rien vos a chier,
Que vos secore a ce besong premier;
Il est vostre oncles, si vos doit bien aidier." [c]
(*Aymeri de Narbonne*, 3797)

Begon expresses his willingness to help his nephew Auberi, and later sends to his own uncle Thierry for help:

"Je ne lairoie por tot l'or que Diex fist
Que n'aille aidier mon chier nevou Aubri." . . .

"Aus mons d'Aussai m'en irez a Thieri,
Il est mes oncles, si ne me doit faillir." [d]
(*Garin*, I, 273; II, 102)

By virtue of this relationship the nephew has claims upon others; Benoit asks Ogier to give arms to his brother Gui,

[a] "Rather would I let all my limbs be cut off, / Than fail my nephew, as long as I can last."

[b] "Rightful Emperor," said he, "great wrong do you. / I am your nephew, you must not fail me."

[c] "I will beg him, if he holds you dear at all, / That he help you in this foremost need; / He is your uncle, indeed he must aid you."

[d] "I would not fail, for all the gold that God made, / To go and help my dear nephew Auberi." . . . / "You shall go to the Monts d'Aussai, to Thierry; / He is my uncle, he must not fail me."

because he is the *Niés Béron qi uos par ama si*[a] (*Chevalerie Ogier*, 6973). Maucion bases his claims to the crown of France upon his relationship to the Emperor through the marriage of his father Ganelon to the Emperor's sister:[84]

> "E si est mun pere Guenes, k'od Karlon est alez;
> Sa serur od a femme, si ke ben le savez:
> Pur ce dei en France estre haltement coronez."[b]
> (*Gui de Bourgogne*, p. 137)

The uncle must not strike or threaten his nephew, send him into danger, nor shall he make fun of him:

> "Non ferez, frere," li quens Guillaumes dit,
> "Il est tes niés et de ta seror fis."[c]
> (*Garin*, II, 245)

> "Sire," ce dist dus Namles, "merci, pour amour De!
> Rollans est vostre niés et de vo sereur nés;
> Se vous l'i envoiés, jamais ne le venrés."[d]
> (*Fierabras*, 2278)

> Quant l'entendi Aiols, molt fu iriés,
> Et dist entre ses dens c'on ne l'ot nient:
> "He! Dieux! chou est mes oncles, je sui ses niés;
> Si ne me deüst mie contralier."
> Sel seüst l'emperere qu'il fust ses niés,
> Ja n'i fust plus gabés ne laidengiés,

[a] The nephew of Beron who loved you so much.

[b] "And my father is Ganelon, who has gone with Charles; / He had his sister to wife, as well you know; / For that should I be publicly crowned in France."

[c] "You shall not do it, brother," said Count Guillaume; / "He is your nephew and your sister's son."

[d] "Sire," thus spoke Duke Naimon, "mercy, for the love of God! / Roland is your nephew, and of your sister born; / If you send him there, never again will you see him."

[84] See E. Sauerland, *Ganelon und sein Geschlecht*, p. 39.

Ains fust molt richement aparelliés.[a]
(*Aiol*, 2640)

Charlemagne considers it his personal duty to seek for the body of his nephew Roland:

"Kar mei meïsme estoet avant aler
Pur mun nevuld que vuldreie truver." [b]
(*Roland*, 2858)

On the other hand, the nephew must reciprocate along the same lines; he must love and serve his uncle and not fail him in time of need; particularly must he avenge the death of his uncle—this is his right, his duty even more than that of the son or brother. Oliver reminds Roland of the allegiance he owes the Emperor:

"Par la foi que devés
Karle vostre oncle, que tant amer devés,
Que feïssiez?" [c]
(*Girart de Vienne*, p. 76)

The Emperor, after quarrelling with Foucon, the nephew of Girart, offers excuses for him:

"Bien sai qu'il est dolans de ce qu'avons a faire
Entre moi et Girart; mas son devoir velt faire
De servir son signeur, son oncle." [d]
(*Girart de Roussillon*, 1533)

[a] When Aiol heard him, much was he angered, / And said between his teeth so that none heard him, / "Ah, God! he is my uncle, I am his nephew; / He ought not to have sought a quarrel with me." . . . / If the Emperor had known that he was his nephew, no more would he have been mocked and insulted, / But rather would he have been richly apparelled.

[b] "For it is necessary for me to go ahead myself, / For my nephew whom I would like to find."

[c] "By the faith which you owe / Charles your uncle, whom you must love so much, / What would you have done?"

[d] "Well I know that he is grieving at what we have to do, / Girart and I, together; but he wishes to do his duty, / By serving his master, his uncle."

The Emperor admonishes Roland of his duty:

"Et vos, biaus niés Rollans," l'empereres a dit,
"Quant ce vient al besoing, ne me devés faillir." [a]
(*Renaut de Montauban*, p. 264, 13)

Ogier alludes to the fealty that he owes his uncle:

"Foi que je doi le duc Namlon porter,
Le mien chier oncle que je doi moult amer." [b]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 2212)

Garin reminds two of his nephews of their duty:

"Et vous Girars et li borgoins Aubris,
Mi nevou estes, ne me devez fallir." [c]
(*Garin*, II, 26)

In at least two passages, the poets seem to be enunciating an axiom: in the poem of *Foucon*, when Foucon hears of the death of his uncle Vivien, he is anxious to start at once and pursue the work of vengeance, urging his mother to summon her family to aid him, and concluding with the argument: *Toz jors l'oi dire: ainz venge nies que fraire* [d] (*Foucon*, ed. Schultz-Gora, 534). The poet of *Aye d'Avignon*, after telling the story of how Guichart and Alori learned of their fathers' plot against their uncle Garnier and for love of their uncle left the court and hastened to warn him, joining his forces, then offers this story as an explanation of what appears to have been an axiom in his time: *Por ce dit on encore: ainz venge niez que fiz* [e] (*Aye*,

[a] "And you, fair nephew Roland," said the Emperor, / "When need comes, you must not fail me."

[b] "By the faith that I must show Duke Naimon, / My dear uncle, whom I must love much."

[c] "And you, Girart, and Auberi le Bourguigon, / You are my nephews, and must not fail me."

[d] Always I hear it said: rather does nephew than brother take vengeance.

[e] For this they still say: rather does nephew than son take vengeance.

2667). These two passages indicate plainly enough that the nephew's obligation in the blood-feud had passed into the form of a popular saying with which the poets of the *Chansons de Geste* were acquainted, but the reason for which, or the origin of which, had become lost; thus the axiom itself, as well as the application of it, as has been seen, becomes part of a literary tradition, carried on long after it had ceased to be understood. The principles of it are obviously to be sought in a period when the nephew was the nearest and dearest, and we have abundant material to show that there has been such a period, which we reach by tracing the way back from literary allusions through popular customs to primitive right.

CHAPTER III

Stylistic Treatment in the Poems

Although it is not always easy to draw the line of demarcation between those features of the French epic which are an integral part of the nephew tradition and those which may be classified as characteristics of literary style, there are nevertheless certain phases which seem to come more appropriately under the head of personal methods of treatment rather than under a subdivision of the legend proper. These are of three sorts, the emotional expression of the uncle-nephew relations, the use of certain formulas of allusion or address on the part of the characters, and the attributing of the conventional relations to those groups of uncle and nephew about whom there could scarcely have been any legend. All these features show the hold which the relationship had upon the mind of the mediaeval poet. As we have thus far traced the story of the active relations between the epic uncle and his nephew, the poet has been following the legend as he knew it, embroidering it but sparsely with the threads of his own personality; the external features of style are however an important indication of the attitude of the poet and in many cases point indubitably to a well-defined convention.

As might be expected, the emotional aspects of the relations are fairly limited; expressions of affection predominate, and are particularly striking in connection with the uncle's lament over the dead body of his nephew. It is perfectly in keeping with the poetic treatment of the nephew that the poet should dwell upon the uncle's anxiety when the young chevalier is in danger, and upon his joy over the latter's successes in battle. Yet it is surprising to find the poet so entirely consistent in the matter: we must either give him credit for a

capability of invention and a definiteness of purpose that are wonderful, considering the crudity of his conceptions in many places and the lack of variety in general, or we must assume that some trace of an older society has left its impress upon the mental habits of his times in such a way that these relations between uncle and nephew are perfectly familiar to him, and that he reproduces them as naturally and as unconsciously as he does other peculiarities of the period.

At any rate, citations might be multiplied almost indefinitely to show that emotionally the relations under discussion are in harmony with their more external features. The *Roland* must again be used as a prominent example of this, just as it undoubtedly served as a model for later poets to follow; yet in characterizing it as a model, we must be careful not to attribute utter lack of originality to the others. Léon Gautier, to mention only one critic, has probably given too great importance to the part of imitation in other poems, and not enough to the presumption that the fondness of the uncle had some foundation in family life. Speaking of Vivien, Gautier expresses himself with a considerable amount of disparagement:

"C'est une pure fiction, c'est une pure invention de nos épiques. Voyant la place que tenait Roland auprès de Charlemagne, voyant partout le succès qu'avait le neveu du grand empereur, ils résolurent de créer un autre Roland dans la geste de Guillaume. Ils dédoublèrent leur héros primitif, et calquèrent le neveu de Guillaume sur le neveu de Charlemagne. Ils prirent, en quelque manière, un vieux portrait de Roland, et se contentèrent d'écrire au bas: 'Vivien.' Procédé naïf!" [85]

A thoughtful examination of the two stories will show that the affection between the Emperor and Roland is throughout purely personal, while that between Guillaume and his nephew is less personal than it is a matter of *lignage:* the personal element being subordinated to the worship of the family, so that here at least there is no ground for depreciation of the invention of Vivien as an epic character. Against Gautier's

[85] Gautier, *Epopées Françaises*, IV, 417.

opinion may be set that of Gaston Paris, who says of the cycle of Charlemagne and of that of Guillaume that: "Ce sont donc deux cycles indépendants l'un de l'autre, nés dans des provinces différentes et restés longtemps sans contact."[86] The discovery in 1903 of the *Chançun de Willame,* whose ancient part is contemporary with the *Roland,* disproves Gautier's theory.[87] It would seem then that the safer conclusion, since as we shall see the nephew tradition can be traced back historically as well as poetically to remotest antiquity, is that it is an essential part of the earliest French versions of both cycles, and that when the two were merged it persisted, becoming to some extent influenced by the extreme use made of it in the *Chanson de Roland.* Just how much is to be attributed to this influence and how much to a sociological basis can probably not be accurately determined; if the theme were so utterly an imitation, and as Gautier believed, a calculating one at that, it would certainly not have remained so consistently a part of the epic traditional material and would not have been so harmoniously developed from beginning to end, but like the majority of evident imitations would have gone from bad to worse until it finally died of exhaustion; when the nephew-tradition does die out in the epic, it is not from over-exertion, but on account of the change in social conditions. The arbitrary manufacture of genealogical ties, pointed out by Gaston Paris as one of the signs of decadence, is in itself, so far as the nephew is concerned, not a mark of imitation;[88] the later poems really make less use of this relationship than do the earlier ones, so that on the whole it seems likely that the imitations and *remaniements* of the *Chansons de Geste* neglected this phase of the ancient epic more and more, probably because the development of the family and

[86] Gaston Paris, *Histoire Poétique de Charlemagne,* p. 81.

[87] Professor Weeks, in *Romania,* XXXIV (1905), p. 261, note 1, was perhaps the first to dissent from Gautier's view, saying briefly: "L. Gautier a cru le type de Vivien calqué sur celui de Roland. Nous ne voudrions pas, cependant, soutenir cette thèse."

[88] *Littérature française au Moyen Age,* p. 42.

the growth of closer ties between parents and children rendered such points less intelligible to the readers of a later period.

(*a*) *Anxiety of Uncle*

The intensity of the uncle's anxiety or fear for the safety of the nephew, and the exuberance of his ultimate rejoicing at the latter's success, are well represented in all the poems. This anxiety often expresses itself in the form of a prayer for the protection of the nephew during a battle or a combat, while the rejoicing is sometimes a passionate outburst, sometimes an embrace, according to the desire of the poet to make much or little of the situation. When Roland first makes his appearance in the army of the Emperor, the uncle entrusts him to the care of Ogier, on account of his extreme youth:

> " Ogier," dist il, " tenez moi conuenant
> De mon neuou, por ce quel sai enfant:
> Car nule rien n'aime ge atretant." [a]
> (*Aspremont*, ed. Bekker, p. 44, col. 2)

Charlemagne's distress at leaving Roland behind on the retreat from Spain is very keen:

> Sur tuz les altres est Charles anguissus:
> As porz d'Espaigne ad laissiet sun nevuld.
> Pitiet l'en prent, ne poet muer n'en plurt . . .
>
> Pluret des oilz, tiret sa barbe blanche,
> Suz sun mantel en fait la cuntenance . . .
>
> " Jo l'ai laissiet en une estrange marche.
> Deus! se jo l' pert, ja n'en avrai escange." [b]
> (*Chanson de Roland*, 823, 829, 839)

[a] "Ogier," said he, "keep a compact with me, / About my nephew, because I know he is young; / For nothing else do I love so much."

[b] Above all others is Charles anxious; / In the mountain-passes of Spain he has left his nephew. / Pity seizes upon him, he cannot help but weep . . . / He sheds tears, plucks his white beard, / Under his mantle he hides his countenance . . . / "I have left him in a foreign land. / God! If I lose him, never shall I have his like."

On arriving at Roncevaux after the disaster, his first word is: *U estes vus, bels niés*[a] (2402). In *Fierabras,* his distress is keen when he has been falsely persuaded that Roland is dead:

"Ahi! Rollans, biaus niés, com vous avoie chier!
Jamais ne vous venrai .I. tout seul jour entier.
Ja Damedieu ne plaice, qui tout a à jugier,
Que jamais sur mon cief port coronne d'ormier."
Lors se pasma li rois sur le col du destrier;
Ja en alast a terre, ne fuissent li estrier . . .

"He! las," fait il, "quel perte ai fait par ma folour!
Biaus niés, je vous ai mort par ma mauvaise errour."[b]
(*Fierabras,* 4565, 4574)

And when he hears that his nephew still lives: *le cuer en ot joiant; il ne fust pas si liés pour l'onnour d'Oriant*[c] (4621). He prays for the success of Roland, who is engaged in single combat with Renaut:

"Glorieus sire pere, par vo sainte bonté,
Garissies moi Rollant de mort et d'afoler,
U trametes tel signe qu'il soient desevré."[d]
(*Renaut de Montauban,* p. 322, 19)

[a] Where are you, fair nephew.

[b] "Ah! Roland, fair nephew, how dear I held you! / Nevermore shall I see you for even a single day. / May God not please, who has all to judge, / That ever on my head I shall wear a crown of pure gold." / Then the King fainted upon the neck of his steed. / He would surely have fallen to the ground, were it not for the stirrups. . . . / "Alas!" said he, "What a loss I have had through my folly! / Fair nephew, I have killed you through my wretched error."

[c] His heart was joyful at this; he would not have been so happy for all the lands of the Orient.

[d] "Glorious Lord and Father, by your sacred bounty, / Protect me Roland from death and injury, / Or send me such a sign that they are parted."

He watches during the combat with Otinel, and fears when his nephew receives some hard blows:

"Diex," dist li rois, "com cist cop est pesant!
Sainte Marie, garissés moi Rollant!"
Se Rollans chiet, n'en soiez merveillant,
Quant son cheval est desous lui morant.[a]
(*Otinel*, 468)

When Roland and his opponent come to an agreement the uncle asks:

"Biaus niés," dit il, "com vos est convenant?
Dites le moi, quar j'en sui moult engrant."[b]
(*Otinel*, 604)

His anxiety is extreme when during a combat with Oliver Roland's helmet is cleft by a sword-stroke; he runs to him and takes off his helmet:

Quant sain le trouve, grant joie en a eu.
"Bials niés," dist il, "grant paor ai eu
Que ne fussiés ne mors ne confondus."[c]
(*Girart de Vienne*, p. 92)

In this fight Roland and Oliver are engaged in combat on account of their respective uncles, who pray each for the safety of his nephew during the fight (p. 133 ff.).

That Baudoin is constantly present in Charlemagne's mind is attested by his joy when his nephew wins a tournament, by his attempts to dissuade him from crossing the Rune, by his vexation when he learns that Baudoin has disobeyed his com-

[a] "God!" said the King, "how ponderous is that blow! / Saint Mary, protect Roland for me!" / If Roland falls, be not amazed at it, / When his horse is dying under him.

[b] "Fair nephew," said he, "how goes it with you? / Tell me, for I am very anxious about it."

[c] When he finds him sound, he feels great joy. / "Fair nephew," he said, "I had great fear / Lest you might be killed or overwhelmed."

mand and crossed once more, and by his pretence at anger, concealing his real joy, when they meet again:

Grant joie ot l'emperere quant son neveu enmaine;
A son cors desarmer fu la premiere paine,
Puis vesti dras de lin et bliaut taint en graine.
Par toute l'ost parolent dou neveu Karlemaine,
Qui a fait outre Rune la jouste premeraine.[a]
(*Chanson des Saisnes*, LXXVI, 1)

"Biau niés," dist l'ampereres, "trop iestes amors [?]
De passer outre Rune: trop est cruex li pors."
"Sire," dist Baudoins, "qar outre est mes tresors:
Ce qi est griés as autres, m'est solaz et depors."[b]
(*Saisnes*, CV, 14)

"Hé, Dex!" dist Karlemaines, "com est outraliez![39]
Se Saisne le m'ocient, suens en iert li pechiez,
Et miens en iert li diax et li domages griez."[c]
(*Saisnes*, CXXX, 20)

Meïsme Karlemaines s'en est .iij. fois seigniez,
Ses braz li giete au col par molt granz amistiez;
La fu molt Baudoins acolez et baisiez.
La joie est comencie, et li duels est laissiez.

[a] The Emperor felt great joy when he leads away his nephew; / To disarm him was his first care, / Then he put on him linen garments and a tunic dyed scarlet. / Throughout the army they talk of the nephew of Charlemagne, / Who fought across the Rune an extraordinary tourney.

[b] "Fair nephew," said the Emperor, "too fond are you / Of crossing the Rune; too dangerous is the passage." / "Sir," said Baudoin, "on the other side my treasure is; / That which is hardship to others, to me is pleasure and enjoyment."

[c] "Ah, God!" said Charlemagne, "how angry he is! / If the Saxons slay him, his will be the wrong, / And mine will be the grief and the great loss."

[39] Read *contraliez?* Seemingly a confusion between *outrecuidiez* and *contraliez*.

Sor toz an fu li rois et joianz et haitiez;
Nequedant samblant fist que il fust molt iriez.[a]
(*Saisnes*, CXXX, 52)

The emotion of Gondrebuef on hearing of the pitiful plight of his nephew Anseïs, who is besieged in Estorge, is equalled by that of Charlemagne, the other uncle of Anseïs:

Rois Gondrebues mout tenrement plora;
Quant les nouveles oï et escouta,
Ne pot respondre; tous li cuers li sera . . .

Rois Gondrebues mout petitet menga,
Pour Anseïs, son neveu, sospira.[b]
(*Anseïs de Cartage*, 9023, 9041)

Quant Karles l'ot, mout en est abosmes,
Tenrement plore, li cuers li est seres,
L'eve li cort fil a fil les le nes.[c]
(*Anseïs de Cartage*, 9270)

In a similar way the poet depicts Guillaume's anxiety for Vivien, who is fighting in Spain:

Guillaumes fut corocies deurrement,
De son nevot li poise aparement,
Qu'est en Espaigne entre paiene gent,
Ou se conbat a l'acier et au brant.

[a] Charlemagne crossed himself three times, / He throws his arms about his neck with great affection; / Then was Baudoin much caressed and embraced. / Joy has begun, and grief has ceased. / Above all men, the King was joyous and cheerful; / Nevertheless he made pretence that he was very angry.

[b] King Gondrebuef wept tenderly; / When he heard and listened to the news, / He could not reply; all his heart was oppressed.... / King Gondrebuef ate but little, / For Anseïs, his nephew, he sighed.

[c] When Charles hears this, he is much downcast, / Tenderly he weeps, his heart is oppressed, / The water runs trickling down along his nose.

"Deu," dist Guillaumes, "con j'ai lou cuer dolant."[a]
(*Enfances Vivien*, 3139)

He is disturbed by a dream about Vivien, asks Girart for news of him, and hastens to the rescue at the battle of l'Archamp:

Voit lou Guillelmes, a poi qu'il n'est desvés:
Beaus niés Gerars, por Deu! car me contés
De Vivïen novelles et vertés" . . .

Et dist Guillelmes: "Baron, car vos hasteis;
Se Vivïens i est a mort navrés,
A tos jors mais en serai adoleis."[b]
(*Chevalerie Vivien*, 1102, 1269)

His anxiety for Vivien is intense during the battle of Aliscans:

Li quens Guillaumes voit ses homes morir;
Forment li poise, quant nes pot garandir.
Viviën kiert, mais ne le puet veïr;
Quant il nel trueve, le sens quide marir.[c]
(*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 40)

His joy is equally keen on seeing Bertrand, who has just been released from a Saracen prison by Renoart:

"Biaus niés Bertrans, n'est or lieus de parler;
Jou ne vos puis basier ne acoler,

[a] Guillaume was greatly irritated; / He is disturbed evidently about his nephew, / Who is in Spain among the pagan race, / Where he is fighting with his steel blade. / "God!" said Guillaume, "how sad is my heart!"

[b] Guillaume sees him, and is almost beside himself; / "Fair nephew Girart, in Heaven's name, tell me / News of Vivien and true reports." . . . / And Guillaume said: "Barons, pray hasten; / If Vivien is wounded to death there, / For evermore I shall be afflicted."

[c] Count Guillaume sees his men dying; / Greatly it disturbs him, when he cannot protect them. / He seeks Vivien, but cannot see him; / When he finds him not, he almost goes out of his senses.

Car n'avons mie loisir de reposer."[a]
(*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 5669)

The joy of Naimon when the Emperor consents to grant his nephew Ogier a reprieve and to entrust him to his care is so great that he cannot leave him behind when starting on a campaign:

Lors s'est dux Namles si liez dou roy sevrés
Que de liece fu si ses cuers comblés
Qu'ains n'ot tel joie des l'eure qu'il fu nés . . .

Li bons dux Namles d'une rien s'avisa:
Que son neveu Ogier o lui menra:
Tant fist au roy que congié l'en donna.[b]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 453, 553)

Naimon's delight at Ogier's success is exultant; he is distressed when his nephew and a companion are about to fight a duel with two Saracens, and almost heart-broken when he hears that Ogier is dismounted and fighting alone against a hundred, and at the end, when he is complimented on his nephew's brave performance, he luxuriates in quiet enjoyment:

Li bons dux Namles l'ot mene a son tré,
Conjoÿ l'ot de cuer plain d'amisté,
Car assez l'ot baisié et acolé
Ains que de riens l'eüst on desarmé.
N'est pas merveille se il l'ot en chierté,
Selonc ce k'ot cele jornée ouvré.[c]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 1320)

[a] "Fair nephew Bertrand, now is no place to talk; / I cannot kiss nor embrace you, / For we have no time to rest."

[b] Then did Duke Naimon part from the King so joyfully / That his heart was so full of gladness / That he never had such joy since the hour that he was born. . . . / The good Duke Naimon thought of something: / That he shall take his nephew Ogier with him; / He said so much to the King that he gave him leave.

[c] The good duke Naimon took him to his tent, / He greeted him with heart full of joy; / Full long he kissed and caressed him, /

Charles les va de sa main benissant,
Pour aus va Namles moult de cuer souspirant . . .

Quant li dux Namles ceste parole entent,
Tel duel en a pres que ses cuers ne fent:
Ogier regrete li dux moult souplement,
En graciant Dieu de cuer bounement.[a]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 2575, 3045)

Namles l'entent, si en va sousriant,
Moult li estoient cil mot au cuer plaisant . . .

Quant Namles a son neveu regardé,
De courtoisie si duit et avisé,
Forment li plot.[b]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 6982, 7003)

In the same way, the interest of Guerri is acute during the combat of his grand-nephew Gautier with Bernier; he prays to God: ***Garis Gautier, mon neveu le vaillant*** [c] (***Raoul de Cambrai***, 4419 ff.). An interesting combination is found in the fact that it is Bernier's nephew Aliaume who acts as his second in this encounter, while Gautier's great-uncle acts for him. In the *geste* of the Lorrains, Garin is in despair on learning of the capture of his nephews:

Au Lohérenc fu la nouvelle dit
Que si nevou i furent trestuit prins.

Before they had relieved him of any of his armor. / It is no wonder if he held him dear, / According to what he performed that day.

[a] Charles goes blessing them with his hand, / For them Naimon goes sighing very deeply. . . . / When Duke Naimon hears this word, / Such grief has he that his heart almost breaks; / The Duke laments Ogier very humbly, / Thanking God courteously and heartily.

[b] Naimon hears him, and goes away smiling; / Very pleasant to his heart were these words. . . . / When Naimon looked at his nephew, / In courtesy so practised and gifted, / Greatly he pleased him.

[c] Protect Gautier, my nephew so valiant.

Ez vous le duel contreval l'ost Pepin.[a]
(*Garin*, II, p. 204)

As is usual with the uncle, the first thought of the wounded Garnier, the hero of *Aye d'Avignon*, on reviving, is for his nephews:

Li dus ce fu pasmés, mais lues s'est esperis.
"Seignors," ce dist Garniers, "por l'amor Dieu, mercis.
Ou sont mi dui neveu, Guichart et Aulori?"[b]
(*Aye*, 3107)

(*b*) *Occasional Quarrels*

That the relations between uncle and nephew are not always peaceful bears testimony to the knowledge which the poet possesses of the vagaries of human nature; intimate as the connection is, and perhaps by virtue of its very closeness, we find its harmony temporarily interrupted by occasional protracted disputes. Surely these are copied from life: with their violent natures, their outbursts of pettishness, their abrupt descent from the heights of greatness to the level of ordinary humanity, the heroes of the epic, whether Greek or French, certainly appear at times very close to the living model.[90] Charlemagne and Roland indulge in many disagreements, the Emperor sometimes striking his nephew with his glove, while Roland, though in general cool and reasonably polite, is sometimes goaded by rage to the point of striking back, but is always prevented. So, too, are other nephews kept from striking the uncle by the recollection of the respect due him; the consistency with which the poets make use of this device to

[a] To the Lorrain the news was told / That his nephews were all taken. / Lo! the grief throughout the army of Pepin.

[b] The Duke had fainted, but soon regained his senses. / "My lords," said Garnier, "for love of God, I beg of you, / Where are my two nephews, Guichart and Alori?"

[90] Andrew Lang has also pointed out this parallel between the two epics, pp. 297 ff., of his *Homer and his Age*.

moderate the nephew's wrath suggests a very deeply rooted feeling of the sacredness of the uncle's position in general. There is no difficulty in reëstablishing friendly relations, and the quarrel ends in reconciliation. The effect of these stormy scenes from a dramatic standpoint is to enliven the monotony of what to us are rather tedious accounts of battles, and it may be surmised that the mediaeval world was moved by these interludes not to terror or suspense, but rather to a smile of appreciation.

The anger of Roland because Charlemagne had boasted of the veterans of his army, and his refusal to combat Fierabras, stir the Emperor himself to wrath; while Oliver and the giant are fighting, he upbraids his nephew again; and he finally punishes him by threatening to send him on a dangerous mission:

Karles trait son gant destre, qui fu a or parés,
Fiert le comte Rollant en travers sur le nés;
Apres le caup en est li clers sans avalés;
Rollans jete le main au branc qui est letrés;
Ja en ferist son oncle se il n'en fust ostés.
"Ha, Dix!" dist Karlemaines, "comment sui vergondés,
Quant icil me ceurt seure qui mes niés est clamez." [a]
(*Fierabras*, 166)

"Hé glous," dist l'enperere, "bien vous ai escouté;
N'i ossastes aler pour vostre mauvaisté.
Fils a putain, couars, a tart avés parlé;
Encor vous sera il, se je vif, reprouvé."
Rollans se taist tous cois, ne li a mot sonné,

[a] Charles draws off his right glove, which was embroidered with gold, / Strikes Count Roland across his nose; / After the blow the bright blood flows down. / Roland puts his hand to his blade, which is inscribed; / He would surely have struck his uncle with it had he not been taken away. / "Ah, God!" said Charlemagne, "How I am shamed, / When he runs at me who is called my nephew."

Fors tant qu'il dist: "Biaus oncles, dites vo volenté." [a]
(*Fierabras*, 822)

"Biaus niés," ce dist li rois, "trop sui pour vous irés;
Tel lieu vous trametrai anchois .ii. jors passés,
U jamais ne venrés lumiere ne clartés." [b]
(*Fierabras*, 2264)

At another time he falls into a passion with Roland for making peace with Oliver:

"Glous," ce dist Karl, jamais ne t'iert rové!
Fui de mon ost! Trop i a demoré."
"Non ferai, Sire," dis Rollant li mambré.
"Ne m'en irai, tant com vos i serez." [c]
(*Girart de Vienne*, p. 159).

When Roland mildly pokes fun at his uncle and advises him to give up France for good to Gui de Bourgogne, the Emperor flies into a passion and soon arouses the resentment of his nephew, who answers back in plain language:

Quant l'entandi Karlon, si a le chief crollé,
Qu'il se bien que ses niez Rollans l'a ranposné:
"Ha! glous," dist l'emperere, "com tu es forsené!
Ains ne me fu par toi .i. bons consaus donés" . . .

[a] "Ha, knave!" said the Emperor, "I have heard you perfectly; / You dared not go, for your cowardice. / Son of a dog, coward, too late you have spoken; / You will still, if I live, be reproached for it." / Roland is quiet and silent, nor spoke a word, / Save that he said: "Fair uncle, say your pleasure."

[b] "Fair nephew," thus spoke the King, "on your account I am very angry; / To such a place will I send you ere two days be past, / Where never will you see light nor gleam."

[c] "Villain!" thus spoke Charles, "never was it commanded! / Flee from my army! Too long hast thou remained here!" / "I will not do so, Sire," said Roland the prudent, / "I shall not leave, so long as you are here."

"Laissomes ce viellart qui tous est assotéz:
A .c.M. dyables soit ses cors commandés!" [a]
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 1042, 1061)

Charlemagne's attempts to curb the ardent nature of his nephew Baudoin, who wishes to go love-making into the very midst of the enemy, lead to an interchange of opinions, beginning with a warning on the part of the uncle, and culminating in the nephew's taking his departure in a fit of temper:

"De passer outre Rune vos fais banc et defois,
Baudoin mon neveu et ces autres François." [b]
(*Saisnes,* CXXV, 6)

A lui s'an va tot droit, ja sera araisniez:
"Baudoin," dist li rois, "mes commanz est laissiez.
Je ai véu tel ore que ja ne l' pansissiez;
Mes de mes amis sui afebliz, ce cuidiez:
Por ce, ce m'est avis, me covient desprisier.
Hom privez mal achate, ce tesmoigne li briés.
Li autre l'ont tenu, vos estes sorcuidiez.
Vos me demostrez bien comment vos me prisiez." [c]
(*Saisnes,* CXXX, 58)

When Baudoin rushes off in spite, he cries: *Et se je an retor,*

[a] When Charles heard him, he shook his head, / For he knows well that his nephew Roland has derided him; / "Ha! knave," said the Emperor, "how mad thou art! / Never was good counsel given me by thee!" . . . / "Let us leave this old man who is all besotted; / To a hundred thousand devils let him be commended!"

[b] "From crossing the Rune I prohibit and interdict you, / Baudoin my nephew, and these other Frenchmen."

[c] To him straightway he goes; now he will be admonished; / "Baudoin," said the King, "my command is neglected. / I have seen a time when you would not have thought it; / But I am weak in friends, you think; / For this, in my opinion, it suits you to disdain me. / A man bereft fares ill, so the writing testifies. / The others observed it, but you are arrogant. / You show me plainly how you esteem me."

jamais m'amor n'aurez[a] (CXXXII, 33), whereupon his uncle decides that he will cool his love of adventure by bidding him go among the enemy and bring back Sebile's ring, and the Saxons exclaim: *N'aimme pas son neveu, qu'ou met an tel randon*[b] (CXXXVI, 25).[91] Baudoin quite properly resents this foolish whim:

"Hai Karles, vieillarz! Dex te doint ancombrier!
Se je muir antre Saisnes, que cuides gaaigner?
Tu n'amas onque home s'il ne fu losangier
Ou tel que tu péusses tot a ton vuel plaissier.
Par ton forfait fu morz Rollanz et Olivier."[c]
(*Saisnes*, CXLIX, 39)

In the *Prise d'Orenge*, Guillaume becomes angry with his ironical nephew Guielin, and says to him:

"Se n'estoit or por honte et por viltage,
Ge te dorroie une colée large."
Dist Guielins: "Vos feriez folage.
Huimès dirai, ne me chaut qui le sache:
'L'en soloit dire Guillaume Fierabrace,
Or dira l'en Guillaume l'amiable.'
En ceste vile par amistié entrastes."[d]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 1558)

[a] And if I return, never shall you have my love again.

[b] He does not love his nephew, who drives him to such violence.

[c] "Ha! Charles, old man! God give thee ill! / If I die among the Saxons, what thinkest thou to gain? / Thou didst never love a man if he was not a flatterer, / Or such that thou couldst bend wholly to thy will. / By thy misdeed was Roland killed, and Oliver."

[d] "If it was not for shame and opprobrium, / I would give thee a good blow." / Said Guielin: "You would do a foolish thing. / Henceforth I shall say, and I care not who may know it, / 'They were accustomed to say Guillaume of the terrible arms, / Now they will say Guillaume the amiable.' / You entered this city through love."

[91] Read *on*?

There is a quarrel between Guerri and his nephew Raoul when the former advises against continuing the feud with Herbert's sons:

> Raous parole au coraige hardi:
> "On soloit dire le riche sor Guerri,
> Qu'en tout le mont n'avoit .j. si hardi,
> Mais or le voi couart et resorti."
> Guerris l'oï, fierement respondi:
> Por trestout l'or d'Abevile en Ponti,
> Ne volsist il qe il l'eüst gehi,
> Ne qe ces niés l'en eüst si laidi.[a]
> (*Raoul de Cambrai*, 2179)

In *Garin*, Fromont upbraids his nephew Thiebaut and threatens to strike him, but is prevented by friends.

(*c*) *Grief of Uncle*

The emotional phase which seems to appeal most strongly to the poets is the attitude of the uncle after the death of the nephew. His laments are endless, and the poet takes evident pleasure in making his grief as heart-rending as possible. From the general resemblance of such passages to a prototype in the *Chanson de Roland*, it might be assumed that here, if anywhere in the poetic treatment of this relationship, the later poets must be taxed with imitation. Yet all such passages have an atmosphere of sincerity; there is to be sure an occasional verse or hemistich following directly after the announcement of the death of a character, which sounds as if the poet were perfunctorily complying with the *bienséances* when he does not wish to expatiate upon the uncle's grief, but he so generally does wish to expatiate upon it that short laments are

[a] Raoul speaks, the stout-hearted: / "People were accustomed to say 'the powerful Sir Guerri,' / For in all the world there was not one so bold, / But now I see him cowardly and faint-hearted." / Guerri heard him, proudly he replied: / For all the gold in Abbeville en Ponthieu, / He would not have wished that he had declared this, / Nor that his nephew had vilified him so.

the exception. These passages are in the main so long that they cannot be gone into here in detail.

Charlemagne's grief is increased when he finds the body of Roland; he weeps and tears his hair and faints repeatedly and finally denounces Ganelon:

> Pitiet en ad, ne poet muer n'en plurt . . .
> Nen est merveille se Carles ad irur.
> Descent a pied, alez i est plein curs,
> Si prent le Cunte entre ses mains ambsdous,
> Sur lui se pasmet, tant par est anguissus.[a]
> (*Roland,* 2873, 2877)

> "Jamais n'iert jurz de tei n'aie dulur.
> Cum decarrat ma force e ma baldur!
> Nen avrai ja ki sustienget m'honur;
> Suz ciel ne quid aveir ami un sul.
> Se j'ai parenz, nen i ad nul si prud."
> Trait ses crignels pleines ses mains ambsdous,
> Sur lui se pasmet tant par est anguissus.[b]
> (*Roland,* 2901)

> "A grant dulur tiendrai pois mun reialme:
> Jamais n'iert jurz que ne plur ne m'en pleigne.
> Amis Rollanz, prozdum, juvente bele,
> Cum jo serai ad Ais en ma capele,
> Viendrunt li hume, demanderunt nuveles;
> Je's lur dirrai merveilluses e pesmes:
> Morz est mis niés, ki tant suleit cunquerre" . . .

[a] He is moved to pity, and cannot help but weep. . . . / It is no wonder if Charles feels sorrow. / He dismounts, runs to him, / Takes the Count in both arms, / Faints over him, so distressed is he.

[b] "Never will there be a day when I do not lament thee! / How my strength and my pride will fail now! / I shall have none to defend my honor; / On earth I do not think I have a single friend. / If I have relatives, I have none so brave." / He plucks out his hair with both hands, / And faints over him, so distressed is he.

"Ki guierat mes oz a tel poeste,
Quant cil est morz ki tuz jurz nus cadelet?
E! France dulce, cum remeins hoi deserte!
Si grant doel ai que jo ne vuldreie estre." [a]
(*Roland*, 2914, 2926)

"Si grant doel ai que ne vuldreie vivre,
De ma maisniée ki pur mei est ocise.
Ço me duinst Deus, li filz seinte Marie,
Einz que jo vienge as maistres porz de Sizre,
L'anme de l' cors me seit hoi departie,
Entre les lur fust aluée e mise,
E ma car fust delez els enfuïe."
Pluret des oilz, sa blanche barbe tiret.[b]
(*Roland*, 2936)

Echoes of this grief are heard in other poems: in giving Aymer the fief of Spain, the Emperor weeps and says:

"Car g'i perdi le mielz de mon barné,
Le mien neveu, don j'ai le cuer iré." [c]
(*Narbonnais*, 2968)

[a] "In great grief I shall hereafter hold my realm; / Never will there be a day I do not weep nor lament. / Friend Roland, brave knight, fair youth, / When I am at Aix in my chapel, / Men will come, they will ask news; / I will tell them strange and evil things; / My nephew is dead, who was so accustomed to conquer" . . . / "Who will guide my hosts with such authority, / When he is dead who always leads us? / Ah! Sweet France, how dost thou remain today deserted! / So great grief have I that I would wish not to exist."

[b] "So great grief have I that I would wish not to live, / On account of my household which is slain for me. / May God grant me this, the son of Saint Mary, / Before I come to the great pass of Cize, / That my soul today may depart from my body, / And should be set and placed with theirs, / And my body buried beside them." / He sheds tears, and plucks his white beard.

[c] "For I have lost the best of my knights there, / My nephew, wherefore my heart is afflicted."

At the beginning of the *Aymeri de Narbonne*, Charles is represented as returning from Spain, overcome with grief at the loss of Roland:

"Biaus niés," dist il, "vostre ame soit garie,
En paradis coronnée et florie!" . . .

Nostre enperere se prist a dementer,
Et son neveu Rollant a regreter,
Et ses barons que tant soloit amer:
"Biaus niés," dist Charles, "com mar vos vi finer!
Ne porrai mès tel ami recovrer,
Ne sai en cui me porrai mès fier!" . . .

"Biaus niés," fist il, "cil Dex qui ne menti
Ait de vostre ame et pitié et merci."[a]
(*Aymeri*, 134, 540, 586)

Lors plora Karlemaines, tant fu d'ire destrois,
Et maudit Guenelon le traïtor renois
Qui son neveu vandi as paiens espanois.[b]
(*Chanson des Saisnes*, XVIII, ms. Arsenal, n° 175)

With these passages can be compared those expressing the Emperor's grief at the death of his nephew Baudoin:

"Molt m'auront mal mené ceste gent paienor:
De mes amis m'ont mort le meillor et la flor:
An Roncevax ocistrent Rolant le fereor,
Que Ganes li traïtes, li cuverz boiseor,

[a] "Fair nephew," said he, "may your soul be saved, / In Paradise crowned and bedecked! / . . . / Our Emperor began to grieve, / And to mourn for his nephew Roland, / And his barons whom he was wont to love so much: / "Fair nephew," said Charles, "how untimely I saw you pass away! / Never can I replace such a friend; / I know not in whom I can henceforth trust!" . . . / "Fair nephew," quoth he, "that God who did not lie, / May He have pity and mercy on your soul."

[b] Then Charlemagne wept, so crushed was he with grief, / And cursed Ganelon, the renegade traitor, / Who sold his nephew to the Spanish pagans.

Fist ocire as paiens, don j'ai au cuer iror;
De ça me r'ont ocis Baudoin mon nevor,
Qui onques par meschief ne fist vilain retor.
Hé, Dex! la mort m'anvoie, sanz faire lonc demor!"[a]
(*Saisnes,* CCLIX, 19)

Challes nostre ampereres plore fort et sospire,
Sa grant barbe chenue sache forment et tire,
Comme cil qi ot cuer et dolant et plain d'ire;
La ou Baudoins gist, le frainc au cheval tire;
Qant il l'a conéu, lors commença a dire:
Ha, Baudoin," dist il, "tant as sosfert martire,
Por t'onor essaucier, por garder ton ampire!"
A donques traist l'espée, q'il se voloit ocire.[b]
(*Saisnes,* CCLX, 1)

"Ha! biau niés," dit li rois, sor toz homes puissant,
"De bien ferir sambloies ton chier frere Rollant;
De san et de voisdie l'aliez trespassant."
Lors se bat l'amperere et va forment plorant,
L'aive des oilz li va de la face colant;
Ne pust celer son duel, q'il n'an face samblant.[c]
(*Saisnes,* CCLXVIII, 5)

[a] "This pagan race will very harshly have treated me; / Of my friends they have slain the best and the flower; / At Roncevaux they killed Roland the combattant, / Whom Ganelon, the lying traitor, / Caused the pagans to slay, wherefore I have grief in my heart; / Here they have slain my nephew Baudoin, / Who never wantonly made a saucy retort. / Ah, God! send me death, without making a long delay!"

[b] Charles, our Emperor, weeps much and sighs, / His long hoary beard he pulls and plucks, / Like one whose heart was full of grief and wrath; / There where Baudoin lies, he draws rein; / When he recognized him, then he began to say: / "Ah, Baudoin," said he, "such martyrdom hast thou suffered, / To exalt thy fief, to preserve thy empire!" / Then he drew his sword, for he wished to kill himself.

[c] "Ah! fair nephew," said the King, powerful above all men, / "In hitting hard thou didst resemble thy dear brother Roland; /

The lament of Guillaume for Vivien is suggestive of that of Charlemagne over Roland, but it is more violent, quite in keeping with his passionate nature, and it has besides a sincerity which makes it penetrating and appealing:

Ot lou Guillelmes, li sans li est mueis;
N'ot mais teil deul dès l'ore que fu neis,
Car entor lui vit ses boias copeis . . .[92]

A grant mervaille fut corociés Guillelmes,
Cant Vivïen voit gesir a la terre . . .

Ans n'ot mais deul qui si li fust a certes;
De son destrier chiet a terre et chancelle,
Li uns leis l'autre se pasment a la terre.
Cant se redrece, sa dolor renovelle:
"Niés Vivïens, con ai en toi grant perte!
De vo lignage estes li plus honestes."[a]
(*Chevalerie Vivien*, 1862–1874)

Si i perdit de ses homes la flur,
E sun nevou dan Viviën le prou,

Thou didst go exceeding him in wisdom and cleverness." / Then the Emperor beats his breast and goes weeping hard, / The water from his eyes goes running down his face; / He could not conceal his grief, so as not to betray it.

[a] Guillaume hears him; his blood stirs; / He never felt such grief since the hour that he was born, / For around him he saw his bowels ripped open. . . . / Marvelously was Guillaume angered / When he sees Vivien lying on the ground. . . . / Never felt he grief which would have been so keen; / From his steed he falls to the ground and totters; / One beside the other, they swoon upon the ground. / When he rises, he renews his grief: / "Nephew Vivien, what a great loss I have in thee! / Of your lineage you are the most honorable."

[92] Ms. de Paris, Bib. Nat. fr. 468, has two additional verses here:

Tel duel en a, a pou qu'il n'est desvez;
Ja n'iert mes liez nul jor de son aé.

Pur qui tuztens el quer out grant dolur.[a]
(*Willame*, ed. Suchier, 8)

"Diex!" dist Guillaumes, "com ai mon cuer dolant.
Receü ai hui damage si grant,
Dont me daurai en trestot mon vivant."
"Niés Viviën, de vostre hardement
Ne fu nus hom, puis ke diex fist Adan.
Or vos ont mort Sarrasin et Persant.
Terre, car ouvre, si me va engloutant![93]
Dame Guiborc, mar m'irés atendant;
Ja en Orenge n'ere mais repairant."
Li cuens Guillaumes vait tendrement plorant,
Et ses .ii. poins vait si fort detorgant,
Ke sor les jointes en vait li cuirs rompant,
E li clers sans des ongles degoutant.
Viviën vait doucement regretant,
Soventes fois se claimme las, dolant.
De sa dolor mar ira nus parlant,
Car trop le maine et orible et pesant.
Au duel k'i maine si chaï de Bauchant,
Encontre terre se vet sovant pasmant.[b]
(*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 706 ff.)

[a] And lost there the flower of his men, / And his nephew, Lord Vivien the brave, / For whom he had always great sorrow in his heart.

[b] "God!" said Guillaume, "How sorrowful is my heart. / I have received today so great an injury / From which I shall suffer all my lifetime." / "Nephew Vivien, of your courage / Never was any man, since God made Adam. / Now Saracens and Persians have killed you. / Earth, pray open, and go swallowing me up! / Lady Guiborc, in vain will you be awaiting me; / Never more shall I be returning to Orange." / Count Guillaume goes tenderly weeping, /

[93] Ms. Arsenal 6562 inserts here *Et si reçoif ce chétif las dolant.* The 75 verses of the Halle edition, describing this episode, deserve to be cited in full, were space available; intensity of feeling and beauty of expression combine to make a remarkable passage.

"Mors est Bertrans, dont ai au cuer dolor;
De mon lignage ai hui perdu la flor." [a]
(*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 431)

"Las!" dist Guillaumes, "com dolereus reclaim!
De mon lignage ai perdu tot le grain;
Or n'i a mes ke le paille et l'estraim." [b]
(*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 837)

S'avés oï, franc chevalier gentil,
De la dolor qu'en Aliscans soufri,
De Viviien, son neveu, qu'il perdi,
Et de Bertran, que paien l'ont saisi,
Guicart le prou, Gerart et Guïelin . . .

"De mon lignage ai perdue la flor,
Ja mais par home n'i averai secors,
Nus ne me set en ceste grant tristour." [c]
(*Moniage Guillaume*, 15, 3236)

Vait s'en Guillelme, perte i a faite grant,
De ses .ii. ielz vait tenrement plorant
Et son neveu Vivïen regretant . . .

And wringing his two hands so hard, / That over the joints the skin bursts, / And the bright blood drips from the nails. / He goes softly lamenting Vivien; / Ofttimes he calls himself miserable, sorrowful. / It will be useless for anyone to continue speaking of his grief, / For he feels it too deeply and horribly. / At the grief which he feels, he fell from Baucent, / Toward the ground he goes often swooning.

[a] "Bertrand is dead, wherefore I have grief in my heart; / I have lost today the flower of my race."

[b] "Alas!" said Guillaume, "how sorrowful a lament! / I have lost all the good grain of my race; / Now naught is left save the straw and the litter."

[c] And you have heard, noble and gentle knights, / Of the grief he suffered at Aliscans, / Of Vivien his nephew, whom he lost there, / And of Bertrand, how pagans captured him, / Guichart the brave, Girart and Guielin. / "Of my race I have lost the flower; / No more shall I have aid from men; / None knows me in this great sorrow."

"Las! mes lignages est a declin tornez,
Morz est mes niés, Vivïenz l'alosez,
Mes chiers amis qu'ert de ma seror nez.
Et Guicharz pris, uns novelx adobez,
Qui ja ne fust d'armes mauves clamez,
Qui empres moi tenist mes heritez."[a]
(*Foucon*, ed. Schultz-Gora, 132, 335)

Grief and anger at the death of Raoul de Cambrai combine to increase the desire for revenge on the part of his uncle Guerri, whose love for him is so great that he goes about over the battlefield seeking his dead body and quite forgetting the fate of his own sons, who are killed in the same battle; when he is reproached by Raoul's mother for having neglected his nephew, he reminds her of this great grief:

Son neveu trueve, s'en fu en grant esmai.
Il le regrete si con je vos dirai:
"Biax niés," dist il, "por vos grant dolor ai.
Qi vos a mort jamais ne l'amerai,
Pais ne acorde ne trives n'en prendrai
Desq'a cele eure qe toz mors les arai:
Pendus as forches toz les essillerai.
Aalis dame, qel duel vos noncerai!
Jamais a vos parler nen oserai" . . .

Guerris se pasme sor le piz del baron . . .

Lors ot tel duel del cens quida issir.

[a] Guillaume goes away; he has suffered a great loss; / He goes tenderly weeping with both eyes, / And lamenting his nephew Vivien. / "Alas! My race has come to ruin, / My nephew is dead, Vivien the honored, / My dear friend who was born of my sister. / And Guichart captured, a new-made knight, / Who never would have been called bad at arms, / Who after me would have held my heritage."

"Bias niés," dist il, "ne sai qe devenir"[a] . . .[94]
(*Raoul*, 3166, 3181, 3192)

The laments of other uncles under similar circumstances are of the same nature; when Ogier is supposed dead, for example:

Dux Namles a Ogier moult regreté.
"Ha, Diex!" dist il, "rois plains d'umilité,
Vit ainc mais nus home de tel aé
Si bel, si preu, si plain de seürté,
Si tres courtois ne si tres apensé?
En lui n'avoit nule riens fors bonté.
Quant me ramenbre que paien l'ont tué,
Petit s'en faut que le cuer n'ai crevé."[b]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 3067)

The lament of Girart over the death of his nephews is in a similar strain:

"Mon bon neveul Guibert hai hui véu ocirre:
Jamais de si grant deul ne puis que me consirre" . . .
Quant voit Booz son neveu gisant mort en la presse,

[a] His nephew he finds, and was in great dismay. / He laments him as I shall tell you: / "Fair nephew," said he, "for you I am in great grief. / Him who has killed you, never shall I love him, / Nor accept peace nor compact nor truce from him / Until that hour when I shall have them all, dead; / Hanged upon gibbets, I shall flay them all. / Aalis, lady, what sorrow shall I announce to you! / Never shall I dare tell you of it." / Guerri swoons upon the breast of the baron. / Then he felt such grief he was almost beside himself. / "Fair nephew," said he, "I know not what to do."

[b] Duke Naimon laments Ogier much. / "Ah, God!" said he, King full of humility, / Lived there ever any man of such an age / So fair, so brave, so full of confidence, / So very courteous or so prudent? / In him there was naught save goodness. / When I remember that pagans have killed him, / It lacks but little ere my heart breaks."

[94] Cf. page 41.

Une grant pesse a pris, de fort plorer ne cesse,
Et dist: "Li jones preux! li ploins de courtoisie!
Li biaux! li fors! li fiers! ha cy perdu la vie?"[a]
(*Girart de Roussillon*, 1890, 4965)

And when Charlemagne attacks the fortress of Montauban with showers of stones, the poet says: ***Mainz plora son neveu et avoec son ami***[b] (*Renaut*, p. 349, 31).

(*d*) *Attitude of Nephew*

Thus far the position of the uncle has been treated mainly as an objective one; it will be interesting to pause for a moment to see what the attitude of the nephew is in all these relations with his uncle, and to examine him as an active rather than as a passive element. He does not look upon his uncle with the abasement that he does his father—there is no lack of respect, but he stands before him as man to man, loving, honoring and serving him as a loyal comrade, not as a master. Roland is usually represented as impulsive, headstrong, and even rebellious at times, but ready to perform any deed of daring on behalf of Charlemagne; the later poems attribute to him fewer good qualities, and emphasize his defects more than do the earlier ones, as they do in the case of the Emperor himself, so that if we take the accounts of his life in pseudo-biographical sequence, we find him to be decidedly quarrelsome and fairly insubordinate whenever his uncle's wishes do not coincide with his own. The *Charlemagne de Venise* reproduces what must be considered the first quarrel between the two; when the Emperor discovers his sister and her husband in their retreat at Sutri, he attacks them with a knife, where-

[a] "My good nephew Guibert I have seen slain today; / Never can I resign myself to such sorrow." . . . / When he sees his nephew Booz lying dead in the crowd, / He felt great grief, he ceases not from weeping hard, / And said: "The brave young knight! the type of courtesy! / The fair! the strong! the bold! Has he lost his life here?"

[b] Many a one wept for his nephew, and with him his friend.

upon the child Roland springs at him like a little fury, grasping his hand so violently that "le sang jaillit des ongles." [95] According to the *Entrée en Espagne,* after Roland has been slapped in the face by his uncle, he is on the point of attacking him with his sword, but remembers the many favors Charlemagne has shown him, so he refrains, and simply deserts the camp, remaining away a long time:

> Le roi ferist, quant il fu remembrant
> Qe il l'avoit noriz petit enfant.
> Del treif s'en va honteus et sospirant.[a] [96]

Passages have already been cited which suggest the fitful moods of a volcano, while from the tone of the *Chanson de Roland* and the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* we get rather the impression of a steady flame of allegiance, kept burning by his sense of duty to his uncle.

Baudoin, Roland's half-brother, is equally fiery, yet when he has quarrelled with his uncle he quickly repents; he is in dismay when the Emperor is vexed with him, yet he teases his uncle a little before becoming reconciled with him:

> Baudoins toz iriez repaira a sa tante;
> A son oncle est meslez, tart est que se repante;
> Ne se set consoillier, durement se demente.[b]
> (*Chanson des Saisnes,* CXXXIII., 1)

> Molt par fu Baudoins plains d'ire et abosmez.
> Mauvaisement li chiet, ce li est vis, ses dez;

[a] He would have struck the King, when he remembered / That he brought him up as a child. / From the tent he goes, ashamed and sighing.

[b] Baudoin, all sorry, repaired to his tent; / He has quarrelled with his uncle, he longs to show penitence; / He knows not what to decide, he abandons himself to grief.

[95] Gautier, *Epopées Françaises,* III, 70.

[96] Cited by Gautier, *Epopées Françaises,* III, 170.

N'a pas le gré s'amie, a son oncle est meslez.[a]
(*Saisnes,* CXLVI, 1)

"Gloriox rois celestes," ce dit li niés Karlon,
"Tant sui antelantez de fole antancion;
Je voi ici venir le mien oncle a bandon,
Armez sor le cheval, destors le conphenon;
Orandroit cuide panre de ma mort vangison,
Crient que ne m'aient mort Saisne(s) et Esclavon;
Et je sui tant mauvais et ancrimé felon
Que de son bien li vuel randre mal guerredon.
Ne me puis an mon cuer trover nule raison
Que pardoner li puisse ne ire ne tançon
Devant que je l'aie feru sor le blazon."[b]
(*Saisnes,* CLVI, 3)

The real test of the closeness of their relations is when Baudoin is left in command of the Saxons, who are still rebellious though their leader has been slain; now his dependence upon the Emperor is more marked; he misses him, longs for him, prays for him, but his uncle is no longer within reach:

Baudoins sanz son oncle sofferra l'anvaïe,
Dou mainte bone targe iert troée et partie.
Et mainte dure broigne derote et desartie . . .

"Se j'éusse Karlon mon oncle detenu,
Par fol se fussent Saisne desor moi ambatu" . . .

[a] All full of sadness and downcast was Baudoin. / Badly, he thinks, do his dice turn out for him; / He has not the favor of his friend, and has quarrelled with his uncle.

[b] "Glorious celestial King," thus spoke the nephew of Charles, / "So full am I of a foolish plan; / I see my uncle coming swiftly hither, / Armed, upon his horse, with standard unfurled; / Now he expects to take vengeance for my death, / He fears that Saxons and Slavs have killed me; / And I am such a wicked and confirmed rascal, / That for his kindness I wish to give him a poor reward; / I cannot in my heart find any reason / That I can pardon him either anger or dispute / Until I have struck him upon the buckler."

"Et ses je mant mon oncle, il vanra, ce cuit, lant" . . .

"A mon oncle direz le mien contenement,
An Saissoigne me vaigne socorre maintenant" . . .

Des biax oilx de son chief commença a plorer,
Et Karlemaine d'Aiz son oncle regreter . . .

"Gardez, se il vos plaist, de mort et d'ancombrier,
Karlemaine mon oncle qi tant m'a éu chier."[a]

(*Saisnes*, CCXIV, 29, CCXXI, 22, CCXXIII, 10, 22, CCXXXIV, 12, CCLVII, 41)

Gui de Bourgogne is throughout the conscientious deputy and the faithful general of his uncle; Anseïs de Cartage, *léger* and unstable as he is, nevertheless means to serve the Emperor, and puts his trust in him, confident that in the hour of his distress, despite his own shortcomings, he will be supported by his uncle. Thus all his nephews place implicit confidence in the Emperor; at the close of Roland's career his trust in Charlemagne is sublime:

Co dist Rollanz: "Cornerai l'olifant;
Si l'orrat Carles, ki est as porz passant.
Jo vus plevis, ja returnerunt Franc."[b]

(*Roland*, 1702)

Of the various nephews of Guillaume Fierabrace, Bertrand

[a] Without his uncle, Baudoin will suffer invasion, / In which many a good targe will be pierced and broken. / And many a hard coat-of-mail torn and crushed. . . . / "If I had kept my uncle Charles, / In vain would the Saxons have rushed down upon me." . . . / "And if I summon my uncle, he will come, I think, slowly." . . . / "To my uncle you will tell my situation, / That he come to Saxony to succor me now." . . . / He began to weep with the fair eyes in his head, / And to lament Charlemagne of Aix, his uncle. . . / "Protect, if you please, from death and injury, / Charlemagne my uncle, who held me so dear."

[b] Thus spoke Roland: "I will sound the horn; / And Charles will hear it, who is crossing the passes. / I assure you, the Franks will return."

not only has the most active relations with his uncle, but he possesses as well the most distinctive character; there is a great deal of reciprocity in his attitude towards his uncle, while in the case of Vivien there is a highly developed sentimental feeling without much action on the part of the nephew. Bertrand is the companion and often the adviser of Guillaume; he argues with him, objecting to his undertaking the Saracen expedition; he is deeply sympathetic when Guillaume loses a part of his nose in combat; he plays chess with his uncle in Orange; he gives him good advice, and reproves him in moments of weakness; he plays an important part in the invention of the *charroi;* he appears as the intimate and inseparable companion of Guillaume, following him to war and doing his best to help him:

Ses niés Bertrans l'en prist a aresnier:
"Oncle Guillaume, estes vos enragiez?
Ainz mes por home ne vos vi esmaier!" [a]
(*Couronnement Louis,* 360)

Si le besa, quant l'eaume ot deslacié,
Tot en plorant li cuens Bertrans ses niés,
Et Guielins et li cortois Gautiers.
Tel peor n'orent a nul jor desoz ciel.
"Oncles," fet il, "estes sains et hétiez?" [b]
(*Couronnement,* 1144)

"Vo droit seignor ne devez pas haster,
Ainz le devez servir et hennorer,
Contre toz homes garantir et tenser." . . .

[a] His nephew Bertrand began to address him: / "Uncle Guillaume, are you crazy? / Never before did I see you dismayed for any man!"

[b] And then kissed him, when he had unlaced the helm, / All the while weeping, Count Bertrand his nephew, / And Guielin and the courteous Gautier. / Such fear they never had any day on earth. / "Uncle," quoth he, "are you sound and well?"

. . . "Vos dites voir, beau niés,
La léauté doit l'en toz jorz amer;
Dex le commande, qui tot a à jugier." [a]
(*Charroi de Nîmes*, 423, 442)

"Oncles," dit il, "qu'avez a dementer,
Estes vos dame, qui pleurt ses vevetez?" [b]
(*Charroi*, 795)

Ses niés Bertrans l'en prist a chastoier:
"Oncles," dist il, "tu te veus vergoignier
Et toi honnir et les membres tranchier." [c]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 362)

"Dex!" dist Bertrans, "beau pere droiturier,
Cum somes ore traï et engignié!
Par quel folie est cet plet commencié,
Dont nos serons honi et vergoignié,
Se Dex n'en pense, qui tot a à jugier." [d]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 392)

"Oncle Guillaume, tant féis folement
Quant en Orenge alas si faitement
Cum pautoniers et a tapinement." [e]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 1705)

[a] "Your rightful lord you must not provoke, / But rather must you serve and honor him, / Against all men protect and defend him." . . . / "You speak truly, fair nephew, / Loyalty must one always love; / God commands it, who has all to judge."

[b] "Uncle," said he, "what have you to lament? / Are you a lady who bewails her bereavement?"

[c] His nephew Bertrand began to admonish him: / "Uncle," said he, "thou wishest to shame / And disgrace thyself, and have thy limbs hewn off."

[d] "God!" said Bertrand, "fair righteous Father, / How we are now betrayed and deceived! / By what folly was this affair begun, / By which we shall be shamed and disgraced, / If God gives not heed to it, who has all to judge."

[e] "Uncle Guillaume, so foolishly didst thou, / When thou didst go to Orange in such manner / As a low wretch, and secretly."

Dit Bertrans: "Sire, s'or avoie auferrant!
D'aisdier mon oncle ai le cuer desirant." [a]
(*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 5427)

The character of Vivien is marked with less individuality than that of Bertrand; he is consistently loyal to his uncle as the real chief of the *lignage*, and, rather passively to be sure, has a deep affection for him; he is heroic in his every act, but never helps Guillaume in the practical ways that come so easily to Bertrand, and on the whole is dependent upon his uncle in a way that makes him a pathetic rather than a sympathetic figure.[97]

"Va, si me di a Guillelme mun uncle,
Si li remenbret del champ desuz Girunde,
Quant combatit al paien Alderufe.
Ja set il bien, desconfit l'ourent Hungre.
Jo vinc el tertre ot treis cenz de mes homes,
Criai Munjoie pur la presse derumpre;
Cele bataille fis jo veintre a mun uncle." [b]
(*Cançun de Willame*, ed Suchier, 637)

"Dex!", dist il, "sire, beau pere omnipotent,
Par qui est toute creature vivant,
La toie force ne va mie faillant,
Secor mon oncle, se toi vient a commant!" [c]
(*Aliscans*, ed. Jonckbloet, 410)

[a] Said Bertrand: "Sir, if now I only had a courser! / My heart is much desirous of aiding my uncle."

[b] "Go, and say to Guillaume my uncle, / If he remembers the field down along the Gironde, / When he fought the pagan Alderufe. / Full well he knows, the Hungarians had routed him. / I came to the hill with three hundred of my men, / I cried 'Monjoie,' to break up the crowd; / That battle I made my uncle win."

[c] "God!", said he, "Lord, Father omnipotent, / Through whom is every creature living, / Thy strength goes never failing, / Help Thou my uncle, if such is Thy will!"

[97] This characterization is truer of the Vivien of the later epics, as distinguished from the Vivien of the *Willame*.

Guillaume appears to rely considerably upon his nephew Guielin:

"Oncle Guillaume," Guielins li respont,
"Gentix homs, sire, vos querriez amor:
Vez Gloriete, le pales et la tor,
Quar demandez ou les dames en sont,
Bien vos poez engaigier por bricon."
Et dist li cuens: "Tu dis voir, valleton." . . .
"Niés Guielins," dist il, "quel la ferons?
James en France, ce cuit, ne revenrons,
Ne ja neveu, parent, ne beserons."
"Oncle Guillaume, vos parlez en perdon" . . .
"Niés Guielin, comment le porrons fere?
Tuit somes mort et livré a damaige."
"Oncle Guillaume, vos parlez de folaige."[a]
(*Prise d'Orenge*, 515, 1030, 1055)

Such in the main are the characteristics of the nephew, although there are individual variations: Bernier, for example, is at first so loyal to his master Raoul that he accompanies him on an expedition against his uncles, whereupon his mother cries in horror:

"Il sont si oncle, si qe bien le seit on;
Se le lor perdent, mar les i verra on!"[b]
(*Raoul de Cambrai*, 1319)

[a] "Uncle Guillaume," Guielin replies, / "Gentle man, sir, you were seeking love; / See Gloriette, the palace and the tower, / Ask where the ladies are, / You can well engage as jester." / And the Count said: "Thou sayest truly, lad." . . . / "Nephew Guielin," said he, "what do we here? / Never, I think, shall we return to France, / Nor embrace nephew or relative again." . . . / "Uncle Guillaume, you speak in vain." . . . / "Nephew Guielin, how can we do it? / We are all killed and overwhelmed." / "Uncle Guillaume, you speak foolishly."

[b] "They are his uncles, as is well known; / If they destroy their nephew, they will not be welcome here!"

Raoul fails to assist his uncle Guerri in battle, gradually separating from him, in the desire to perform greater feats by himself:

Mais d'une chose le taign je a effant,
Qe vers son oncle fausa de convenant;
Guerri guerpi, son oncle le vaillant
Et li barons qi li furent aidant . . .

Mais d'une chose le taign je a legier:
Guerri guerpi, son oncle le legier
Et les barons qi li durent aidier.[a]
(*Raoul*, 2664, 2710)

The nephew is frequently represented as watching anxiously his uncle's fate in a combat, or as being overcome with grief at his defeat:

Qant Gautiers voit son oncle enprisonné,
Tel duel en a le sens quide derver.[b]
(*Raoul*, 4071)

"Oncle," che dist Bertram, "vous a il adessé?"
"Nenil," dist il, "biaus niés, la merci Dameldé."
Et Bertram passe avant a loi de bacheler.[c]
(*Elie de Saint-Gilles*, 819)

"Pléust au roi des ciex et sa mere Marie,
Que je fusse por vous sous vo targe florie."[d]
(*Aye d'Avignon*, 491)

[a] But in one thing I hold him childish, / That towards his uncle he broke his agreement; / Guerri he left, his uncle the stout-hearted, / And the barons who were aiding him. . . . / But in one thing I hold him thoughtless: / He left Guerri, his uncle, the agile, / And the barons who had to aid him.

[b] When Gautier sees his uncle taken prisoner, / Such grief does he feel, he is almost beside himself.

[c] "Uncle," thus spoke Bertrand, "has he touched you?" / "Not he," said he, "fair nephew, by the mercy of God." / And Bertrand passes on, according to the custom of the knight aspirant.

[d] "Would to the King of Heaven and his mother Mary, / That I were for you under your decorated shield."

The Count of Bourges expresses his sympathy with his exiled uncle:

"Elies, biaus dous oncles, je sui honis.
A tort fustes cachiés de ces pais,
Si vous desireta rois Loeys.
Je sui fieus vo seror, se Dex m'aït,
Dame Marsent la bele o le cler vis." [a]
(*Aiol*, 3309)

Foucon sees his uncle Guischart in danger, and exclaims: *Dex! de mon oncle! si volontiers l'esgart* [b] (*Foucon*, 2474). Galien rescues his uncles Hernaut de Beaulande and Girart de Vienne from the Saracens.[98] Roland saves his uncle's life by slaying Eaumont at the combat in the gorge of Aspremont.[99]

(*e*) *Lack of Recognition*

A favorite theme with the poets is the meeting of uncle and nephew who do not know each other; sometimes they are mutually attracted by a sympathetic interest, more often they fight, yet the poet does not impair the sacredness of the family tie by introducing a serious outcome, but on the contrary discloses their identity to each other and reconciles them after he has momentarily awakened the suspense of his audience.

In one instance we find a nephew killing his uncle by mistake, taking him for an enemy, and thinking he is in reality avenging him; Auberi, the uncle, pardons the horrified and grief-stricken nephew, Gascelin, who thereupon pursues Auberi's enemy and kills him (*Auberi*, ed. Tarbé, p. 119 ff.). Baudoin jousts with Charlemagne, who does not recognize him;

[a] "Elie, gentle uncle, I am shamed. / Wrongfully were you driven from this country, / And King Louis disinherited you. / I am your sister's son, so may God help me, / Lady Marsent the beautiful and fair of face."

[b] God! My uncle! So gladly do I look out for him.

[98] Gautier, *Epopées Françaises*, III, p. 342.
[99] Gautier, *Epopées Françaises*, III, p. 87.

merely wishing to display his strength, he declares himself after he has won, and they embrace:

> Baudoins li niés Karlon ne vuet que si pansé
> Fussent séu ancor; la place a delivré,
> Plus viste c'uns oisiax sailli an mi le pré;
> Molt desirre q'il ait a son oncle josté;
> Jamais ne desenflast d'orgoil ne de fierté
> De ce que l'amperere ot devant lui chosé,
> Jusque tant q'il éust son grant pooir mostré.[a]
> (*Chanson des Saisnes*, CLVII, 1)

In *Foucon*, the pagan Povre-Veü meets his uncle Girart, *que molt deüst amer*, who is in the opposing army, and as the two are not aware of their relationship they fight (ed. Tarbé, p. 74). When Aymeri, son of Hernaut, makes his first appearance at Vienne, his uncle Girart takes him for a jongleur, which so angers the nephew that he strikes Girart and makes his face bleed:

> Girars escrie: "Prenés moi cel glouton!
> A unes forches or endroit le pandon!"
> Plus de .LX. li courent a bandon.
> Dit Aymeris: "Estés arier, glouton!
> Ja suis je fils dant Hernaut le baron
> Et niés Girars, que de fi le seit on" . . .
>
> "Aymerit niés, cuers avés de baron:
> Bien traiés a la geste."[b]
> (*Girart de Vienne*, p. 45)

[a] Baudoin, the nephew of Charles, does not wish that his thoughts / Should be known as yet; he has cleared the field, / Quicker than a bird he has leaped into the middle of the field; / He would like much to joust with his uncle; / Never would he relax his presumption and haughtiness / Because the Emperor had scolded him, / Until he had shown his great strength.

[b] Girart cries: "Seize me that knave! / Let us hang him directly to a gibbet!" / More than sixty run swiftly at him. / Said Aymeri: "Stand back, knaves! / I am the son of Sir Hernaut the

Aiol attacks King Louis without knowing that he is his uncle:

Loeys fu a piet entre ses drus,
Li fieus de sa seror l'ot abatu.[a]
(*Aiol*, 3385)

At Orleans the Countess Ysabiaus sees Aiol seeking a lodging, and offers him shelter without knowing him:

C'estoit fiex sa seror, de son linage . . .

S'or seust Ysabieus qu'il fust ses niés,
Molt par fust ses serviches bien enforciés.[b]
(*Aiol*, 1987, 2073)

Bovon de Haumtone takes refuge with the Bishop in Cologne, whom he does not know to be his father's brother:

L'eveske fu son unkle, sachez de verité,
Mes il ne sout ke il fu de son parenté.[c]
(*Boeve de Haumtone*, 1899)

Guillaume, searching the battle-field for Vivien, is attacked by his nephew, who takes him for a Saracen; on being asked his name, Guillaume replies:

"Paiens," dist il, "ja ne vos iert celei.
J'ai non Guillelmes, li marchis au cor neis;
Mes peres est Aymeris apeleis,
Hernals mes freire, li chatis Aÿmers,
Guibers li rois et Beuves li saneis,
Et dans Bernars de Brebant la citei,

baron, / And nephew to Girart, for this is known in very truth. . . . / "Aymeri, nephew, you have the heart of a baron, / And well take after the family."

[a] Louis was on foot among his friends, / His sister's son had felled him.

[b] He was her sister's son, of her race. . . . / If Ysabiaus had known now that he was her nephew, / Full well would her services have been forced upon him.

[c] The Bishop was his uncle, know in truth, / But he knew not that he was of his kin.

Et d'Anseüne Guarins li adureis;
Si est mes niés Vivïens l'aloseis,
Por cui amor suis en cest champ entreis."[a]
(*Chevalerie Vivien*, 1841)

When Gui dons armor and comes to rescue Willame, the latter does not recognize him, so young and small is he:

Cil respundent: "Pur quei nus demandez?
Vostre nevou devez conuistre assez."
Quant l'ot Guillelmes, prist le chief a croller,
Plurat des oeilz tendrement e suëf,
Dunc prent Guiburc durement a blasmer.[b]
(*Willame*, ed. Suchier, 1618)

Ogier saves his uncle Naimon from the hands of the Saracens, and is not at once recognized; on learning each other's identity they embrace with great joy:

Namles l'entent, Dieu en a aoré,
Ainc n'ot tel joie en trestout son aé,
De fine joie li sont li oeil lermé.[c]
(*Enfances Ogier*, 1160)

Combats under the same circumstances between other close relatives are not infrequently narrated, and particularly common as an epic theme all over the world is the combat between father and son; the origin and spread of the latter has been

[a] "Pagan," said he, "it will not be hidden from you: / My name is Guillaume, the marquis with the short nose; / My father is called Aymeri, / Hernaut my brother, the stripling Aymer, / Guibert the king, and Bovon the wise, / And Sir Bernart of Brabant the city, / And of Anseune Garin the inured, / And my nephew is Vivien the renowned, / For love of whom I came into this battle-field."

[b] They reply: "Why ask you us? / You must know full well your nephew." / When Guillaume hears it, he shook his head, / Then wept tenderly and softly, / And begins to rail harshly at Guiburc.

[c] Naimon hears it and praised God: / Never in all his life had he such joy; / With extreme joy his eyes are tearful.

traced by Dr. Murray Potter, who finds its roots in Matriarchy.[100] Dr. Potter adds that the poem of *Maugis* "fairly swarms with encounters between fathers and sons, nephews and uncles, and brothers."[101] There is this great distinction to be made between the father-son and the uncle-nephew combat, as will be seen by a comparison of the folk-lore tales to which Dr. Potter refers with the stories of the French epic: the fight between father and son, ritualistic by origin, becomes the *dénouement* of the story of 'a son in search of a father,' and is based largely upon ignorance of paternity, while the theme of a combat between uncle and nephew is merely an episode, and never in the French epic has it any important bearing upon the general plot.[102] Yet more or less episodic treatment of encounters between father and son is also to be found.[103] The two themes are practically alike so far as our *Chansons de Geste* are concerned, in that with very few exceptions the combat ends with recognition and reconciliation.

(*f*) *Descent Traced through Uncle*

The purely literary treatment cannot always be separated from the legendary in certain phases of the uncle-nephew relations which appear in the *Chansons de Geste,* yet taken from either point of view the conclusions must be the same. Certain conventional expressions recurring so frequently that they may be called formulas appear to have no part in the transmission of the legend of one character or another, but, if a faint line of demarcation can be drawn, they seem rather to give that kind of unconscious testimony which is to be found in purely

[100] *Sohrab and Rustem;* for examples in the Old French Epic, see pp. 82, 83, 86–90, and Appendix A.

[101] Id., p. 87.

[102] Cf. the story of *Tristan de Nanteuil, Galien, Florent et Octavien, Moniage Rainouart,* in Paulin Paris, *Histoire Littéraire,* vol. 22.

[103] Cf. *Floovant, Parise la Duchesse, Raoul de Cambrai* (Bernier and his son), *Macaire,* in *Hist. Litt.,* vol. 22.

stylistic treatment. When the poet, as we have seen, follows a well-defined legend, he gives direct evidence as to the matter in hand, but we see just as plainly, if indirectly, from his use of terms, the position and importance that a given subject assumes in his own mind. Thus the constant repetition of phrases of description produces the same effect upon our conclusions that the recurrence of the same kinds of actions does in the narrative.

The frequency is surprising with which the poet makes his characters trace their descent through the uncle; when the father is mentioned at all in such circumstances, it is usually after the uncle. And the poet himself delights in recalling the relationship, not only in the case of his well-known heroes, but whenever it is possible to attach an uncle to a nephew or a nephew to an uncle, even though the character be introduced but incidentally. In very few instances is the father mentioned to the exclusion of the uncle, but the cases are innumerable in which the uncle-nephew relationship is the only genealogical indication given. The starting point of this method of treatment may very well have been the desire to attach a relative of this degree to the great heroes, the well-known characters of the epic, in order to increase their interest for the audience, as we find primarily the tendency of one character to connect himself by his own statements with another who is known by his great feats to the other characters of the poem, but we also find that the poet in his own person links uncle and nephew together, not only when one or both are well-known characters, but just as frequently when one or both are of but passing interest to the story. The instances in which the poet points out relationship of this sort when it can have no possible effect on the story mount into the hundreds; yet if there is no technical or literary effect, there remains a moral or a sympathetic effect. In other words, it is a device to arouse interest in his characters; and as we must not ascribe to the poet too great capability of literary subjectivity, it remains for us to assume that this method of tracing descent or of claiming relationship

was not uncommon in his actual experience. The importance of the uncle as an ancestor is modified by the attitude of the period towards paternity as the great factor in tracing heredity, but it is plain that the uncle has not as yet entirely lost the dominant power which he once possessed as the head of the family in earlier states of society. It is then a legendary survival of the uncle as the head of the family which causes the poet to attach nephews to Charlemagne and to Guillaume and to a host of unknown, unimportant minor characters as well. These passages are of two kinds, those in which the relationship is indicated by the characters themselves, and those in which the poet speaks in his own person. If the latter class appears here much smaller than the former, it is because the poet more often indicates the relationship as being on the maternal side, and for practical purposes these citations are best relegated to a subsequent section. As the actual wording varies so little, this method of pointing out descent might be called formulas of identification.

"Ami," fait il, "on m'appelle Rollant:
Niés suis Karl l'Empereor poissant." [a]
(*Girart de Vienne*, p. 75)

"Dame," ce dist li quens, "fix sui Milon d'Engler,
Et ai nom Rollans, ensi sui apelés,
Et sui niés Karlemaine au courage aduré." [b]
(*Fierabras*, 2788)

"Son nipote di Carlo imperïero,
E son il fior d'ogni altro cavaliero." [c]
(*Vanto dei Paladini*, II, 7)

[a] "Friend," quoth he, "they call me Roland; / Nephew am I to Charles, the powerful emperor."

[b] "Lady," thus spoke the Count, "I am the son of Milon d'Engler, / And my name is Roland, thus am I called, / And I am nephew to Charlemagne the strong-hearted."

[c] "I am the nephew of Charles the Emperor, / And I am the flower of every other knight."

"Filz sui Girard le conte, ung nobile baron,
Qui tient quite Viane et Lion et Mascon,
Guibort a nom ma mere, fille le duc Bueson,
Niez Hernaut de Biaulande qu'a flori le grenon,
Et cosins Aimeri qui occit le dragon." [a]
(*Doon de Nanteuil*, 69)

"J'ai non Jofroi, niés suis au bon Gaudin." [b]
(*Garin le Loherain*, I, 80)

"Vassaus," fait il, je ai non Olivier.
Nés suis de Genes, fils au conte Rainier.
Mes oncles est Dans Hernaut le guerrier;
Niés suis Girars de Viane le fier." [c]
(*Girart de Vienne*, p. 75)

Dit Aimeris: "Estés arier, glouton!
Ja suis je fils Dant Hernaut le baron
Et niés Girart, que de fi le seit on" . . .

"Fils suis Hermant de Biaulande la grant,
Et niés Girars au corage vaillant." [d]
(*Girart de Vienne*, pp. 45, 49)

"Li rois Garsile est mes germains cousins,
Mes oncles fu Fernagu li gentis,

[a] "I am the son of Girart the count, a noble baron, / Who holds, exempt from claim, Vienne and Lyons and Mâcon, / (Guibort is my mother's name, daughter of Duke Boson) / Nephew of Hernaut de Beaulande with the white moustache, / And cousin to Aymeri, who slew the dragon."

[b] "My name is Geoffroy, nephew am I to the good Gaudin."

[c] "Noble youth," quoth he, "my name is Oliver. / I was born at Genoa, son to Count Rainier. / My uncle is Lord Hernaut the warrior; / I am nephew to Girart de Vienne the bold."

[d] Said Aymeri: "Stand back, knaves! / I am the son of Sir Hernaut the baron, / And nephew to Girart, for it is known in truth." . . . / "I am son to Hernaut of Beaulande the great, / And nephew to Girart of the stout heart."

Icil de Nazze, que Rollans m'a ocis." [a]
(*Otinel*, 242)

"Voir on m'apele Aiol; mes peres est Elie;
Niés sui l'enpereor qui Franche a en baillie;
Je suis fieus sa seror la gentil dame Avisse." [b]
(*Aiol*, 5392)

"Sire," che dist Elies, "je nel puis amender;
Nés sui de douche Franche, de mout grant parenté:
Guillaumes est mes oncles, li marcis au cor nés,
Mes grans sire Aymeris de Nerbone sor mer;
Et sui fieus Julien de Saint Gille le ber." [c]
(*Elie*, 1083)

"Filz suis Gairin d'Anseüne lou dus
Et niés Guillaume a la fiere vertus." [d]
(*Enfances Vivien*, 4016; cf. 700 note, 726 ff.)

Se li demande: "Amis, dont estes nes?"
Bertrans respont, ki tos ert esfreés:
"Sire, de France, niés Guillame au cort nes." [e]
(*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 5367)

"Io ai nun Bertram nies Willame al curbneis." [f]
(*Cançun de Willame*, ed. Chiswick, 3033)

[a] "King Garsile is my cousin german, / My uncle was Fernagu the gentle, / He of Nazze, whom Roland slew."

[b] "Truly, they call me Aiol; my father is Elie; / I am nephew to the emperor who has France in his power; / I am son to his sister, the gentle Lady Avisse."

[c] "Sir," thus spoke Elie, "I cannot prevent it; / I was born in sweet France, of very noble stock; / Guillaume is my uncle, the marquis with the short nose, / My grandsire Aymeri of Narbonne-by-the-sea, / And I am son to Julien de Saint Gille, the baron."

[d] "I am son to Garin d'Anseune the duke, / And nephew to Guillaume of the bold courage."

[e] He asks him: "Friend, where were you born?" / Bertrand replies, who was much terrified, / "Sir, in France, nephew to Guillaume with the short nose."

[f] "My name is Bertrand, nephew to Willame of the crooked nose."

Dist li hermites: "Volentiers, par saint Jake!
Nés fui de France, del païs honerable,
Gaidons ai non, niés sui dame Anestasse,
Feme Garin d'Ansëune le large.
Fils fui d'un duc qui fu de grant parage,
Gerars ot non et si tint quite Blaives."[a]
(*Moniage Guillaume*, 2220)

"Aymeris fu mes oncles, par ma vie." . . .
"Jou ai non Landris li timoniers,
Cousins Guillaume, fil Aymeri le viel."[b]
(*Moniage Guillaume*, 3430, 3456)

"Diva! estes vous freres, qui si vos resenblez?"
Et respont Aulori: "Cosins sommes charnez,
Car nous sommes de freres et de .II. serors nez,
Neveu le duc Garnier de Nentuel la cité."[c]
(*Aye d'Avignon*, 3424)

Gentiex hon fu, niés fu au roi Karlon;
Par son baptesme Anseïs ot a non;
Fiex fu Rispeu et cousins Salemon.[d]
(*Anseïs de Cartage*, 82)

A l'estor vient uns damoisiaus de pris,
Parens fu Karle et cosins Anseïs;

[a] Said the hermit: "Gladly, by Saint James! / I was born in France, in that honorable land; / Gaidon is my name, nephew am I to Lady Anestasse, / Wife to Garin of Anseune the great. / I was son to a duke who was of high birth, / Gerart was his name, and he held Blaives exempt from claims."

[b] "Aymeri was my uncle, by my life!" . . . / "My name is Landri the carter, / Cousin to Guillaume, son of Aymeri the old."

[c] "What! Are you brothers, who so resemble each other?" / And Alori replies: "We are own cousins, / For we were born of brothers and of two sisters, / Nephews to Duke Garnier of Nanteuil the city."

[d] A gentleman was he, he was nephew to King Charles; / By baptism he had the name of Anseïs; / He was son to Rispeu and cousin to Salemon.

Niés fu Sanson et ses oncles fu Guis;
C'est Garsïons, ki tant fu escavis.[a]
(*Anseïs de Cartage,* 10257)

La fu pris le neuov Willame Bertram.[b]
(*Cançun de Willame,* ed. Chiswick, 1720)

A ces parolles, vint Hernaïs d'Orliens.
Icil fu niés a Garin le guerrier,
Et freres Huedon l'esveque droiturier.[c]
(*Garin,* I, 132)

Girart de Commarchis thus makes himself known, in the *Siège de Barbastre:*

"Et si suis fils Buevon, qui est ceste cites,
Nies Bernard de Brubant, nies Guillaume au corneis,
Nies Guarin d'Anseüne, qui pros est et sanes,
Nies Aymer lou conte, qui tant vos a penes,
Nies Guibert d'Andernai, c'est fine verites,
Et freres Guielin, qui tant est adures,
Et nies dant Aymeri, qui vieulz est et melles."[d]
(Ms. Bib. Nat., 1448 fonds fr., fol. 122 v°)

In this connection it may be noted that the poet both in his own person and that of his characters is fond of referring to a man as the nephew (less often as the uncle) of another rather

[a] To the combat came a youth of worth; / He was a relative of Charles and a cousin of Anseïs; / He was nephew to Sanson, and his uncle was Gui; / That is Garsion, who was so slender.

[b] There was captured the nephew of Willame, Bertrand.

[c] At these words came Hernais d'Orléans. / He was nephew to Garin the warrior, / And brother to Odon, the righteous bishop.

[d] "And I am son to Bovon, to whom this city is, / Nephew to Bernart de Brubant, nephew to Guillaume the shortnosed, / Nephew to Garin d'Anseüne, who is valiant and wise, / Nephew to Aymer the count, who has tormented you so much, / Nephew to Guibert d'Andernai, this is the real truth, / And brother to Guielin, who is so practised, / And 'nephew' to Sir Aymeri, who is old and gray."

than by name; frequently the name appears to be brought in as if it were an afterthought. Such passages are so numerous that only a small selection can be made here. In every instance it seems as if the relationship were the thought uppermost in the mind of the poet, as if the name were a secondary consideration and he were making every effort to bring out that relationship. Roland is everywhere *li niés Karlon* to Franks and Saracens alike:

"Li niés Carlun l'ad mort e cunfundut." . . .

"Il nen ad mie de Rollant sun nevuld." . . .

"Rollanz sis niés me coillit en haür."[a]
(*Chanson de Roland*, 2824, 3182, 3771)

A voiz escrie: "O est l'ostel Rollant,
Le neveu Charle, qui des bones fist tant?"[b]
(*Narbonnais*, 2333)

Not seldom another character in the poem addresses Roland as *niés Karlemaine* instead of by name:

"Sire niés Karlemaine, pour Diu vous voel proiier,
Va mon ami secourre qui je voi travillier."[c]
(*Fierabras*, 3503)

"Sire niés l'empereres," dist Renaus, "entendez."[d]
(*Renaut de Montauban*, p. 328, 1)

The Saxons address Baudoin in the same way, and apply the same term to him indirectly as does the poet in his own words:

"Bele," ce dit Sebile qui fine amors mahaigne,
"Huchiez au neveu Karle qi por m'amor ampraigne" . . .

[a] "The nephew of Charles has killed and destroyed him." . . . / "He has nothing of Roland his nephew." . . . / "Roland his nephew took a hatred of me."

[b] Loudly he cries: "Where is the hostelry of Roland, / The nephew of Charles, who did so many deeds?"

[c] "Sir nephew of Charlemagne, for Heaven's sake I want to beg you, / Go aid my friend, whom I see there in sore distress."

[d] "Sir nephew of the Emperor," said Renaut, "listen."

Baudoins li niés Karlon descendi en l'erbois . . .
" C'est Baudoins vo niés, jou vos di en plevine" . . .
Il et li niés Karlon en ont le pris porté . . .
Baudoins li niés Karle est par matin levez . . .
" Et garde Karlemaine de mort et d'encombrier,
Baudoin son neveu o le visage fier." [a]

(*Saisnes,* LXVIII, 10, LXXI, 1, LXXIV, 9, LXXXV, 19, CCXXXVIII, 14, CCXLVIII, 11)

Vivien is to the pagans *li niés Guillaume,* and seems to think of himself in that relation rather than as an individuality, when he says:

" Se ge n'abat des miolz enparenteis,
Et des mellors et des plus abrivés,
Se ge les puis devent moi ancontreir,
Ans ne fui niés dan Guillelme au cort neis." [b]

(*Chevalerie Vivien,* 1902)

" Ses vos envoie Vivïens l'alosés,
.i. niés Guillelme, lou marchis au cor neis" . . .
Dient paien: " C'est li Guillelme niés,
C'est Vivïens, li fel, li enragiés." [c]

(*Chevalerie Vivien,* 116, 136)

[a] "Fair lady," said Sebile, whom extreme love torments. / "Call to the nephew of Charles who is full of love for me." . . . / Baudoin, the nephew of Charles, descended to the meadow. . . . / "That is Baudoin, your nephew, I tell you with assurance." . . . / He and the nephew of Charles have carried off the prize. . . . / Baudoin, the nephew of Charles, rose early. . . . / "And preserve Charlemagne from death and injury, / Baudoin his nephew with the haughty countenance."

[b] "If I do not overthrow some of the best connected, / And the best and most ardent, / If I can meet them face to face, / Never was I nephew to Sir Guillaume with the short nose."

[c] "Vivien, the renowned, sends them to you, / A nephew of Guillaume the marquis of the short nose." . . . / Say the pagans: "That is the nephew of Guillaume, / It is Vivien, the cruel, the furious."

Anfelise announces her desire to marry Foucon:

"Mari vueil panre: or vueil que me löez.
Nies est Guillelme, qui tant vos a penez."[a]
(*Foucon*, ed. Schultz-Gora, 4229)

During the fight between Roland and Otinel:

Li Sarrasin a la color muée;
Tint Courouçouse, dont la lemele est lée;
Au neveu Karl la fera ja privée.[b]
(*Otinel*, 546)

Mes li niés Karle se courut adober . . .

Meis li niés Charle li traverse devant.[c]
(*Otinel*, 747, 858)

Aymer refers to Guillaume, not as his brother, but as the uncle of Bertrand!

"Cuvers paiens, livrés estes a honte,
Se ne me rens dant Hernalt de Gironde,
Lou cuen Bertran et Guillelme son oncle,
Et roi Guibert qui barnages abonde."[d]
(*Prise de Cordres*, 338)

The poet neglects no opportunity of keeping the relationship constantly before his listeners by using such expressions as: *Li niés le roi de Franche i entra tous premiers*[e] (*Fierabras*,

[a] "I wish to take a husband; now I wish you to approve. / He is nephew to Guillaume, who has harassed you so much."

[b] The Saracen changed color; / He held Courouceuse, whose blade is broad; / He will make it familiar to the nephew of Charles.

[c] But the nephew of Charles ran to arm himself. . . . / But the nephew of Charles crosses in front of him.

[d] "Pagan villain, you are delivered up to shame, / If thou dost not surrender to me Sir Hernaut de Gironde, / Count Bertrand and Guillaume, his uncle, / And King Guibert, in whom valor abounds."

[e] The nephew of the King of France entered first of all.

3894); *Et apela o soi son neveu Baudoin*[a] (*Saisnes*, L, 9); *Son neveu Baudoins qui fu freres Rollant*[b] (*Saisnes*, LIV, 18); *Baudoins li niés Karlon venoit toz sox errier*[c] (*Saisnes*, LXVII, 8); *Plaist vus oïr del niés dame Guiburc*[d] (*Willame*, 1178); *Et Viviens i fut, li niés Guillelme*[e] (*Willame*, 31); *Tiedbalz li quens, ot sun nevou Esturmi*[f] (*Willame*, 29); *Sire Guillaumes, Bertran cist vostre niés*[g] (*Enfances Vivien*, 3053); *Laissies Bertran, molt est jones mes niés*[h] (*Enfances Vivien*, 3060); *A Rollant son neveu l'a Karles commandée*[i] (*Renaut*, p. 143, 35). Thus the poet explains over and over again who his character is, using the same formula; since it was the custom to recite only a portion of one of these long poems at a time, this method kept continually before the mind of the hearer the relationship of the character, no matter at what stage of the story the recital might be taken up.[104]

As examples of the arbitrary attachment of a nephew to an uncle by the poet without apparent necessity or reason may be cited such instances as that of a combattant in a battle, named Huon de Beorges, of whom the poet says that he *nés fu a Danemarches; uns des neveus Ogier*[j] (*Foucon*, ed Tarbé, p. 73); Elinant is mentioned only twice in the poem of *Aymeri*, and nothing in particular is said of him, but he is introduced

[a] And called to him his nephew Baudoin.
[b] His nephew Baudoin, who was brother to Roland.
[c] Baudoin the nephew of Charles came wandering all alone.
[d] Do you wish to hear of the nephew of Lady Guiburc.
[e] And Vivien was there, the nephew of Willame.
[f] Tedbalt the count, with his nephew Esturmi.
[g] Sir Guillaume, Bertrand, this your nephew.
[h] Leave Bertrand; very young is my nephew.
[i] To Roland his nephew did Charles commend it.
[j] Born in Denmark was he; one of the nephews of Ogier.

[104] Cf. also *Raoul de Cambrai*, 3337, *Prise de Cordres*, 1133, *Mort Aymeri*, 3045, *Chevalerie Ogier*, 3224, 3749, 3845, 3855, *Doon de Nantueil*, 55, *Aye d'Avignon*, 864, *Parise la Duchesse*, 1853, 1904, *Mort Garin*, 4196, 4284, *Foucon*, 5428, 5811, 7364, *Elioxe*, 1639, 2120, 2185.

as *li niés Naimon que Charles ot tant chier*[a] (*Aymeri,* 3656); in connection with the geste of Aymeri, the poet speaks of *li bons rois Otes* and states that *icil fu oncle as chevaliers nobiles*[b] (*Mort Aymeri,* 3085); Berrous is the *oncles Benoit le vaillant escuier,* who was Ogier's squire (*Chevalerie Ogier,* 3436); in the final battle between the Bretons and the Norois the pagans kill Garnier, the Duke of Quoquerie, who was *niés l'Apostaire qui Romme a en baillie*[c] (*Acquin,* 3010). It seems to be a stylistic trick to awaken interest in one character or the other, as in the account of a battle between the French and the Saracens, in which the poet apparently gives all the necessary information about Matamart in one descriptive phrase:

> Rois Matamars son ceval esperone;
> En paienie n'avoit nul plus franc home,
> Rois Synagons est niés et il est oncles.[d]
> (*Moniage Guillaume,* 4214)

(*g*) *Names Connected in Lists of Combattants*

In giving lists of combattants in battle, or of hostages, or in recounting the arrival of reïnforcements to an army, the poet manages to introduce a great many nephews for no apparent reason, usually bringing in uncle and nephew together; it would seem that the association of the two in war was a tradition so firmly imprinted upon the poet's memory that such a combination of names has to him as it were a pictorial suggestiveness. Among the hostages whom the King gives to Raoul to guarantee his promise the poet mentions: *Et Berengier et son oncle Sanson* (*Raoul,* 770); there is no further mention of either, and Langlois, in his *Table des Noms Propres,* considers that the two have no connection with other characters

[a] The nephew of Naimon, whom Charles held so dear.

[b] He was uncle to the noble knights.

[c] Nephew to the Pontiff, who has Rome in his power.

[d] King Matamart spurs his horse; / In pagandom there was not a more noble knight; / King Synagon is nephew, and he is uncle.

of the same name, so that it appears a stylistic device which assigns this relationship to them. Similarly, when Guerri is about to get the upper hand of Bernier, two unknown nephews of the latter come to his rescue, performing their function in this passage, to be heard of no more in the poem:

> Devers Bernier est li gius mal partis,
> Qant d'autre part eiz ces neveus saillis:
> Ce fu Gerars et Henris de Cenlis.[a]
> (*Raoul de Cambrai*, 3448)

Raoul and his uncle Guerri are associated throughout the poem in phrases such as:

> Il et ces oncles vont lor gent ordenant . . .
> Il et ces oncles qi le poil ot ferrant.[b]
> (*Raoul*, 2411, 2492)

In a list of the Breton knights accompanying Charlemagne against the Norois we find:

> Et Tïori et son niés Salemon
> Qui de Bretaigne tint puis la regïon . . .
> Et Salemon, filz de son frere esné.[c]
> (*Acquin*, 70, 747)

In *Elie*, the poet makes one of the pagans comment upon the wonderful strength of one of the combattants, and he adds: *C'est Artus de Bretaigne u Gavain, ses nevos* (654). Even among the pagans, where such accurate genealogy is surely a poetical invention, we find uncle and nephew going together in these battle episodes: *Et Aarofles et ses niés Cladumeaus*

[a] The match is uneven for Bernier, / When on the other side, lo! his nephews have sprung out: / That was Gerart and Henri de Senlis.

[b] He and his uncle go arranging his men. . . . / He and his uncle who has iron-gray hair.

[c] And Thierry and his nephew Salemon, / Who afterwards held the country of Brittany. . . . / And Salemon, son of his elder brother.

(*Covenant Vivien,* 310); *Turlen de Dasturges & sis nies Alfais* (*Willame,* 1710).

Et Anseÿs fiert le vassal Helye,
Mort le trebuche, s'en est l'ame partie;
Symons ses oncles ocist Aubert de Brie.[a]
(*Anseïs de Mes,* 420, 27)

When Guillaume sends to Huon de Floriville for help to avenge the loss of Vivien, the poet tells us that:

Hue et ses niés furent levé par main,
Gaudins li bruns, li fiz au conte Elain.[b]
(*Foucon,* ed. Schultz-Gora, 409)

And on the high seas, Foucon and his companions in their ship:

En haute mer encontrent un dromon,
Qui fert Morgan et le neveu Fanon.[c]
(*Foucon,* ed. Tarbé, p. 15)[105]

When King Louis prepares an expedition to deliver Guillaume from a Saracen prison:

Li rois de France fait faire ses escris,
Un en envoie son neveu Baudewin.[d]
(*Moniage Guillaume,* 3721)

In *Elioxe,* a nephew of the pagan king is introduced without reason and without taking any further part in the action:

[a] And Anseïs strikes the vassal Elie, / He strikes him dead, and his soul departs; / Simon his uncle slew Aubert de Brie.

[b] Huon and his nephew had risen early, / Gaudin the dark, the son of Count Elain.

[c] On the high sea they meet a ship / Which carries Morgan and the nephew of Fanon.

[d] The King of France has his letters written, / One he sends to his nephew Baudoin.

[105] Another version reads: *Del premier jal encontrent un dromon, Qui fu Morant et lo neveu Fanon* (ed. Schultz-Gora, 1290), showing how persistently the scribes retained the idea of relationship, even when other details escaped them.

A tant mostra sa ciere
Li niés le roi d'Artage par une baotiere.[a]
(*Elioxe*, 1061)

It has already been pointed out by Professor Weeks that in the *Cançun de Willame* the names of Gautier de Termes and Reiner are always placed close together; Reiner is the sister's son of Gautier, and it seems to Professor Weeks that "this position is not an accidental circumstance."[106] In enumerating the battalions drawn up for the combat in *Anseïs de Mes*, the relationship seemingly has as much weight with the poet as the names of the leaders:

Droges le tierce, le quarte fist Aimons,
De Tailleborc .I. siens oncles Simons
La quinte, od eux .xx. M. compaignons . . .
Et la sissime fist li rois Anseïs,
De Florivile .I. siens oncles Aikins.[b]
(*Anseïs de Mes*, 414, 9 ff.)

Thus even the external features of the poet's literary style bring out the inevitable association of uncle and nephew.

(*h*) *Forms of Address*

One very interesting phase of the poet's method is the form of address which he causes his characters to employ towards one another: *Biaus oncles, biaus niés, sire niés*, etc., with or without the name in addition. The list does not contain much variety, nor does it give much, if any, assistance in analyzing

[a] Forthwith showed his face / The nephew of the King of Artage through an opening.

[b] Drogon the third, Aimon formed the fourth, / His uncle Simon de Taillebore / The fifth, with them twenty thousand companions. . . . / And the sixth King Anseïs formed, / His uncle Aiquin de Floriville.

[106] Raymond Weeks, "The Newly Discovered Chançun de Willame," *Modern Philology*, III, p. 216.

the individuality of the characters; what it does give, however, is a mathematical demonstration of the importance of the uncle-nephew relations—*oncles* and *niés* as vocatives outnumber all the other forms of family address combined. In this, as in many other phases of the Old French Epic, not only was imitation not frowned upon, but the saving grace of originality was not even recognized. The exordium of the poet to his hearers, the endless prayers which recite the whole story of the Old Testament, the descriptions of grief and of death itself, these and many others contain features of style that amount to a regular convention, the form of which sometimes degenerates into mere tags; it is not easy to determine just what expressions shall be considered tag-rhymes, introduced because the poet's invention gives out, and what ones are to be considered as representing a real aspect of the poet's thought. Gaston Paris states his view of the situation clearly: "il y a déjà dans le *Roland* beaucoup de formules toutes faites, héritage de l'épopée antérieure, qui facilitent au poète l'expression de ses idées, mais la rendent fréquemment banale, et qui l'empêchent trop souvent de voir directement et avec une émotion personnelle les choses qu'il veut peindre."[107] He had previously said of the *Roland:* "Pas une cheville, aucune concession à la rime."[108] The line of demarcation between the conventional formula, which has quite as much *raison d'être* as those of the present day, and the meaningless *cheville,* which is as its name indicates only a stop-gap, is so easily overstepped that each critic will probably make his own individual classification. If any one feature of the poet's use of terms in his treatment of the dealings between uncle and nephew deserves to be called a stop-gap, it is the formulas of address, yet nevertheless there is an indefinably sympathetic character about them which effectually brings out the nature of the sentiments expressed. A few examples will suffice to show the general style, which is common to French and pagans alike: *Ahi! Karles, biaus oncles,*

[107] *Littérature Française au Moyen Age,* p. 63.
[108] *Histoire Poétique de Charlemagne,* p. 24.

jamais ne me venrés[a] (*Fierabras*, 3329); *Bertram, beau sire niés; Entendez, sire niés; Ha, Bertran, sire* (*Couronnement Louis*, 2184, 1543, 1169); *Oncle Guillaume, gentix homs, sire* (*Prise d'Orenge*, 515); *Dex gart toi, niés* (*Raoul de Cambrai*, 835); *Dous niés* (*Renaut de Montauban*, p. 120, 29).[109]

There is also a type of characterization which amounts to a formula, i. e., the terms employed by nephew or uncle in speaking of each other or by others in referring to them: *Karlon vostre oncle l'aduré;*[b] *Karlemaine mon oncle qi tant m'a éu chier* (*Saisnes*, CCXXII, 24, CCLVII, 42); *Ton oncle le gentil, à l'aduré talent; mon neveu le Danois alosé; Berart mon neveu, qui tant a de fiertés; Son neveu Maprin, que durement ama; Maprin, non neveu le guerrier* (*Gaufrey*, 1125, 1575, 1771, 6058, 8858); *Gautier, mon neveu le vaïlant; Mon nevou Raoul, c'amoie tant* (*Raoul*, 4419, ms. de *Girbert*, 662); *Bertran, son neveu, le nobile; Ses .ij. neveus, que il pot amer tant; Bertrans*

[a] Ah, Charles, fair uncle, nevermore will you see me. / Bertrand, fair nephew, sir. / Listen, sir nephew. / Ah, Bertrand, sir. / Uncle Guillaume, gentle sir. / God guard you, nephew. / Gentle nephew.

[b] Charles, your uncle, the proven knight. / Charlemague, my uncle, who held me so dear. / Your uncle the gentle, of the proven ardor. / My nephew, the honored Dane. / Berart my nephew, who has such boldness. / His nephew Maprin, whom he deeply loved. / Maprin, my nephew, the warrior. / Gautier, my nephew the valiant. / My nephew Raoul, whom I loved so much. / Bertrand, his nephew the noble. / His two nephews, whom he loved so much. / Bertrand my nephew, who is brave and valiant. / His nephew, Sir Vivien, the brave. / Sir Godefroi, your valorous uncle. / My uncle Guillaume, the feared. / Guichart my uncle, whose heart was bold. / Protect today my nephew the practised. / My dear uncle Naimon of the wise heart. / My uncle Naimon of the bold heart. / Your uncle Constantine the renowned. / My nephew whom I held so dear. / Your dear uncle, who brought you up gently. / Fromondin, who does not wish to leave his dear uncle. / Enguelier my uncle, who did so much to be praised. / Bovon, my gentle uncle.

[109] The use of *cosin* applied to a nephew as a term of endearment has already been pointed out on page 4 ff.

mis niés, qui est preuz et vaillanz (*Prise d'Orenge*, 10, 84, 1095); *Sun nevou, dan Viviën le prou* (*Willame*, ed. Suchier, 9); *Dant Godefroi vostre oncle de valor; Mes oncles Guillaume li doutes* (*Enfances Vivien*, 774, 4752); *Guichart son oncle, qui le cuer ot hardi* (*Foucon*, 5429); *Garissiez hui mon neveu l'aduré* (*Narbonnais*, 4769); *Mes chiers oncles Namles au cuer sené; Mon oncle Namlon au cuer hardi* (*Enfances Ogier*, 1004, 1115); *Vostre uncle Costentin l'alosé; Le mien neveu que j'avoie tant chier* (*Chevalerie Ogier*, 1416, 3856); *Vostres chiers oncles qui souef vous norri* (*Garin*, I, 146); *Fromondins, qui ne vialt mie son chier oncle guerpir* (*Mort Garin*, 4006); *Enguelier mon oncle qui tant fist a loer* (*Gui de Nanteuil*, 806); *Buevon, mon oncle debonaire* (*Aye d'Avignon*, 166). Thus there seems to be on the part of the poets a clear intention to add as far as possible a complimentary or affectionate epithet in characterizing the uncle or the nephew. By far the commonest term that is applied to the nephew is *fiz sa seror*, a formula which has such an important bearing upon our whole question that it must be treated in a section by itself. There are other formulas to be found in the language of the epic, the most important of which is perhaps that of allegiance: Ogier speaks of the *foi que je doi le duc Namlon porter*[a] (*Enfances Ogier*, 2212); Oliver reminds Roland: *Par la foi que devés Karle vostre oncle* (*Girart de Vienne*, p. 76).

(*i*) *Pagan Uncle and Nephew*

Another phase of the epic which may be treated as a purely stylistic one is the habit of connecting the Saracen uncle and nephew just as is done with the French characters; each poem is remarkably consistent in itself and, as regards the leading enemies of France, the genealogy varies but little from one poem to another, so that it would appear that the legendary material of the *Chansons de Geste* included certain Saracen

[a] Fidelity that I must show Duke Naimon. / By the fidelity you owe to Charles your uncle.

genealogies. And not only is the consistency remarkable with which the same relationship is maintained, but the number of characters among the Saracens or other enemies of France who are described as the nephew or the uncle of another is very large; this combination is very common in accounts of battles, where the nephew frequently appears only once in the whole story. The most frequent method is to attach a nephew to an uncle who is a more important character in the poem, but not seldom do we see two entirely unknown characters combined in this way: *Roi Absalon, ki nies fu au soudant*[a] (*Anseïs de Cartage,* 3674); *Clariun, niés l'amirant et de sa sereur nés* (*Fierabras,* 4065); *Machiner e sun uncle Maheu* (*Roland,* 66); [*Desramés*] *et Tacon, le fil de sa seror* (*Aliscans,* 39);[110] *Lucïon, le neveu l'amustant* (*Anseïs,* 3478); *Goniot d'Alemengne, niés Savari de sa seror germaine* (*Aymeri de Narbonne,* 1775). Sometimes the nephew is not even named, the mere fact of the relationship seeming to answer the poet's purpose: *Iluec ont mort .i. neveu Desïer* (*Anseïs,* 3191); *Et Guis ochist le fil de sa seror* (*Anseïs,* 2775); *Morant et lo neveu Fanon* (*Foucon,* 1291); *.iiii. donsel et uns nies l'amirant* (*Foucon,* 3899); *Et un vallet, qui fu nies l'amiré* (*Foucon,* 3924).

The Saracen *Amirant,* in telling the history of Narbonne, mentions a battle fought there under the Romans, and brings in a certain Fenice, who *niés fu Popée* (*Narbonnais,* 3712); this is the only mention of Fenice, who led the army of Caesar

[a] King Absalom, who was nephew to the Sultan. / Clarion, nephew to the Emir, and of his sister born. / Machiner and his uncle Maheu. / Desramé and Tacon, the son of his sister. / Lucion, the nephew of the Emir. / Goniot d'Allemagne, nephew of Savari by his sister. / There they killed a nephew of Desier. / And Gui slew his sister's son. / Morant and the nephew of Fanon. / Four youths and a nephew of the Emir. / And a lad, who was nephew to the Emir.

[110] This is the reading of Jonckbloet; the Halle ed., vs. 33, reads: *Le jor ont mort maint gentil vavasor, / Et a Guillaume le fil de sa seror.*

against the Britons, while Pompey appears also in the *Prise de Pampelune* (1677, 3024). Another curious instance of the arbitrary creation of a nephew is found in the *Chanson d'Antioche:* the poet makes Tatice a sister's son of the Emperor Alexis, but according to the historian Comnenus, Tatice (or Estatin in the poem) was of Saracen origin and a favorite of Alexis, but there is no evidence that he was related to him (*Chanson d'Antioche, Chant* II ff.). It is also curious to find that the relationship of the pagans is kept in mind by the French troops, as when Garnier addresses King Desramé, and says to him: *Vos et Tiebaus vostre nies, escoutez* (*Foucon,* 7791). It goes without saying that the pagans are always made to bear in mind the relationships among the French; we have seen already many examples of this.

The number of cases of this relationship among the pagans, the extreme care which the poet takes to point it out and to repeat his statements, and the consistency with which he follows out this partial genealogy, all these points tend to indicate the general importance which the uncle-nephew tie assumed in his mind. He delights in underlining the disastrous effect which the loss of a nephew has upon the leaders of the enemy, and he constantly makes his French heroes wreak their vengeance for their own losses upon the nephew of the *amirant* or the *soudant* or some other chief. Furthermore, despite the general tendency to paint the Saracens as black as possible by the free use of uncomplimentary epithets, the poet attributes to them exactly the same characteristics in the uncle-nephew relations that he does to the French. We can find parallel illustrations for nearly all the points of contact between uncle and nephew among the French and among the pagans, but in the latter case particular emphasis is given to their association in war and to the desire for vengeance; the frequency with which he introduces the nephew in battles is surprising—a search of Langlois' *Table* would show hundreds of names. A few citations will show the attributes which the poet attaches to the Saracen uncle and nephew.

An instance of the bringing up of the nephew by the uncle:

C'est li fils Faussetain, qui del Franc est issus.
A Baudart fu norris. Si l' porta Kahus
Au roi Dinel son oncle, qui l'amirant fu drus.[a]
(*Foucon*, ed. Tarbé, p. 67)

After serving his uncle well, the pagan nephew receives marked favors, is granted lands, is given important work to do or is made the confidential messenger of his uncle:

"Mapris, venés avant; bien vous estes encontré;
Vous estes mon neveu, si vous ai moult amé.
Vauclere vous otroi, le païs grant et lé."[b]
(*Gaufrey*, 1520)

Qant il vit Baudoin, ne fu mie atalante;
Cuida Caanins fust, fiz (de) sa seror Aiglante.
"Caanins," fait il, "niés, ta valors m'atalante;
Nul plus bel chevalier ne sai de ta jovente;
De .v. citez roiax vuel acroistre ta rante."[c]
(*Chanson des Saisnes*, CXXIX, 5)

"Sire," dist il, "je irai volantiers
Dedens Sebille lou mesage noncier,
Au roi Judas mon honcle lou guerrier."[d]
(*Prise de Cordres*, 2317)

[a] It is the son of Faussetain, who is the issue of the Frank. / At Baudart he was reared, and Kahus took him / To King Dinel, his uncle, who was a friend of the Emir.

[b] "Maprin, come forward; you are well met; / You are my nephew, and I have loved you much. / I grant you Vauclere, the region great and broad."

[c] When he saw Baudoin, it was not with eagerness; / He thought it was Caanin, son of his sister Aiglante. / "Caanin," quoth he, "nephew, thy valor pleases me; / No finer knight do I know of of thy youth; / By five cities royal I wish to increase thy income."

[d] "Sir," said he, "I will gladly go / Within Seville to announce the message / To King Judas, my uncle, the warrior."

Le roi de Piconie Glorians appela,
Et son neveu Maprin, que durement ama.[a]
(*Gaufrey*, 6057)

Meymes icel jour Bradmund se leva,
Son neveu Graunder a sei apella:
"Graunder," fet Bradmund, "a la prison tost va,
Dy a mes chartrers, ke il veignent a mei sa."[b]
(*Boeve de Haumtone*, 1147)

"En Babiloine t'en covendra aler
Dire mon oncle, qui mout fet a doter,
Que il me viegne aidier sanz demorer."[c]
(*Narbonnais*, 3434)

When King Edgar of England proposes to give his daughter in marriage to Bovon's son, he sends for the latter's uncles:

L'eveske de Londres ad le roi mandez
E quatre contes, uncles a Boun le senez . . .

Kant Boves veit ses unkles, si les ad beisez;
Les noveles del mariage unt contez.[d]
(*Boeve de Haumtone*, 3750, 3756)

The Danish king wants the hand of Flandrine for his nephew, but her father is unwilling to grant it, and the two pagans are at war over the question:

"Le roy danois la quiert, chen sai je vraiement,
Pour donner son neveu, .i. damoisel vaillant,

[a] Gloriant called the King of Piconie, / And his nephew Maprin, whom he deeply loved.

[b] That same day Bradmund rose, / His nephew Graunder he called to him; / "Graunder," quoth Bradmund, "to the prison go straight, / Say to my warders that they come to me here."

[c] "To Babylon you must go, / And say to my uncle, who is much to be feared, / That he come to aid me without delay."

[d] The Bishop of London summoned the King / And four counts, uncles to Bovon the wise; . . . / When Bovon sees his uncles, he kissed them; / They related the news of the marriage.

Gontier est apelé des vaus de Montbruiant."[a]
(*Doon de Mayence,* 6364)

The instances of mutual affection are many: the pagan Desramé shows evident preference for his nephew Baudus over his son Renoart, but as the son is an apostate, the poet would naturally set the father against him in battle:

Dist Baudus: "Sire, or sui toz aprestez;
A l'estandart, biax oncles, vos séez,
Que de Guillaume en cest jor pes aurez.
S'il m'ose atendre tost sera afrontez.
De Renoart point ne vos dementez,
Car hui seront toz .ij. a fin alez."[b]
(*Aliscans,* ed. Jonckbloet, 6347)

Aarofle is indignant because Guiborc forsook her husband, his nephew, and married Guillaume; he threatens Guillaume:

"Ja en Orenge ne porrés mais vertir
A la putain, ke jou doi tant haïr,
Ki mon neveu Tiebaut a fait honir."[c]
(*Aliscans,* ed. Halle, 1149)

Grant joie maine Tibaus li Arabis
Del roi son oncle qui est encore vis . . .

Lors s'entr'acolent li oncles et li nis.[d]
(*Foucon,* ed. Schultz-Gora, p. 453)

[a] "The Danish king seeks her, that I know in truth, / To give to his nephew, a valiant youth; / Gontier he is called, of the Vales of Montbruyant."

[b] Said Baudus: "Sir, now I am all ready; / By the standard, fair uncle, place yourself, / For this day you shall have peace of Guillaume. / If he ventures to await me, straightway will he be attacked. / Do not trouble yourself about Renoart, / For today both will be gone to their end."

[c] "Never shall you return to Orange, / To the slut whom I must hate so deeply, / Who has disgraced my nephew Tibaut."

[d] Tibaut the Arab feels great joy / Over the king, his uncle, who is still alive. / Then uncle and nephew embrace.

"Mon neveu me rendrés l'amiral de Persie,
Et vos r'arés Renaut sain et sauf et en vie." . . .

Garsions d'Antioche a son neveu véu,
Que mais ne garira, tant a del sanc perdu;
Plains fu de maltalent, s'ot le cuer irascu.[a]
(*Chanson d'Antioche*, V, 195, 229)

"Se mon neveu enporte, moult par serés laignier."[b]
(*Fierabras*, 3886)

Grant doel en ot li glos en son corage,
Car Synagons estoit de son lignage,
Frere sa mere, s'en ot au cuer la rage.[c]
(*Moniage Guillaume*, 4642)

Cel jour prisrent li nostre l'amiral des Esclés,
Au tref Huon le Maine la fu emprisonés;
Niés estoit Garsion et de sa seror nés;
Sachiés quant le saura moult en iert adolés.[d]
(*Antioche*, IV, 1011)

"Di moi mon oncle: se tost ne me secor,
De son lignage perdra ja lo meillor."[e]
(*Foucon*, 2663)

[a] "My uncle the Emir of Persia you will restore to me, / And you shall have Renaut back, safe and sound and alive." . . . / Garsion of Antioch saw his nephew, / That he will never recover, so much blood has he lost; / Full of anger was he, and his heart was wrathful.

[b] "If he carries off my nephew, most cowardly will you be."

[c] Great sorrow had the knave in his heart at this, / For Synagon was of his race, / His mother's brother, and his heart was wrathful.

[d] That day our troops took the Emir of the Slavs; / In the tent of Huon le Maine he was imprisoned; / Nephew was he to Garsion, and of his sister born; / Know when he learns this, he will be much grieved by it.

[e] "Tell my uncle for me; If he does not aid me straightway, / He will indeed lose the best of his lineage."

The names of uncle and nephew stand always in close connection in accounts of battles, the nephew combats for the uncle, and the association is always intimate. Corsolt defends the side of the Saracens in combat against Guillaume (*Couronnement Louis,* 620); Sortin fights for his uncle against Jourdain (*Jourdains de Blaivies,* 1804); Desramé and Tibaut go side by side throughout the story of *Foucon,* as do Tacon and Desramé in *Aliscans,* Guiteclin and Baudamas in the *Chanson des Saisnes,* and others.

Et d'autre part Tiebaut s'appareilla,
Et Desramez mout pres de lui ala;
Ce fu son niés, por ce plus s'i fia.[a]
(*Narbonnais,* laisse CLXXXVIII, h, 17, variant)

Huidelon vient devant et Escorfaus ses nies.[b]
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 3626)

Li rois de Cordrez ot Orenges assise;
Ses niez Tiebauz ot sa guerre remprise;[111]
Avec lui ot sa seror Anfelise . . .

Tiebauz descent et ses oncles li rois . . .

"Ha las, pechierre! com set femme engignier!
Guibors et ceste me vouront essillier,
Moi et mon oncle de la terre chacier."[c]
(*Foucon,* ed. Schultz-Gora, 702, 840, 4577)

[a] And on the other hand Tibaut equipped himself, / And Desramé went close beside him; / He was his nephew, therefore he relied upon him more.

[b] Huidelon comes forward and Escorfaut his nephew.

[c] The King of Cordes had besieged Orange; / His nephew Tibaut had resumed the war; / With him he had his sister Anfelise.... / Tibaut descends, and his uncle the king. . . . / "Alas! Miserable me! How doth woman know how to use deceit! / Guiborc and this woman will want to ruin me, / Drive me and my uncle from the land."

[111] The ms. reads *Cordres* and *nies,* as Professor Weeks has verified.

Le chastelain avoit nom Grimouart;
Nyez est Aiquin qui vis a de lepart;
Moult est cruel et de moult male part;
Ovecques luy est ung sien cousin Girart,
Et Cherion, et son niez Avisart,
Et Flourion et son niés Acrochart.[a]
(*Acquin*, 1293)

Mes Guiteclins sospire dou cuer desoz l'aissele,
Qant voit le neveu Karle, tot son duel renovele;
Baudamas son neveu isnelement apele;
Fiz est de sa seror Odierne la bele.[b]
(*Saisnes*, CIII, 18)

Si les conduisit li niés a l'amiré.
Ludaire ot nom, molt fu jentis et ber;
Devant Nerbone ot esté adobés;
Li amiraus le tenoit en cierté.[c]
(*Gerbert de Mes*, 440, 94)

E soun neveu Graunder un autre destrer mounta . . .
Apres sun oncle Bradmund Graunder esporuna.
Bradmund fu alé devaunt, sun neveu va derere.[d]
(*Boeve de Haumtone*, 1178, 1181)

[a] The master was named Grimouart; / Nephew is he to Acquin of the leopard face; / Full cruel is he and of evil parts; / With him is his cousin Girart, / And Clarion, and his nephew Avisart, / And Florian and his nephew Acrochart.

[b] But Guiteclin sighs in his heart beneath his armpit; / When he sees the nephew of Charles, he renews all his grief; / Baudamas his nephew he quickly calls; / He is the son of his sister, Odierne the beautiful.

[c] And the nephew of the Emir led them. / Ludaire was his name, very noble and brave was he; / He had been knighted at Narbonne; / The Emir held him dear.

[d] And his nephew Graunder mounted another steed.... / After his uncle Bradmund Graunder spurred. / Bradmund had gone ahead, his nephew goes behind.

As estres de la tour estes vous Garsion
Et Solimant de Nique, son neveu Rubion.[a]
(*Chanson d'Antioche*, III, 869)

There are occasional, but infrequent quarrels and instances of bad faith or harsh treatment among the Saracen as well as among the French uncles and nephews. Baldus is ill received by his uncle Judas on account of his apostacy, yet the nephew has a certain amount of influence with him still:

Prumiere chose que Judas respondié,
I li a dit: "Honques ne fus mes niés."[b]
(*Prise de Cordres*, 2366 ff.)

Escorfaut leads the French to the stronghold of Maudrane, and speaks of his nephew Emaudras, of his trickery and craft, and threatens to kill him if he will not surrender:

"On l'apele Maudrane," Escorfaut respondi,
"Si la tient Emaudras, .i. cuivers maléis;
Il fu de ma serour nez et angenoïs."[c]
(*Gui de Bourgogne*, 3476)

There is a violent quarrel between Tibaut and his uncle Desramé, who says:

"G'irai derrieres, que mon nies m'a rete
De coardise, voiant tot mon barne."[d]
(*Foucon*, 4833)

Acquin has escaped the pursuit of the French, leaving his nephew Doret to shift for himself; the latter is angry, and inveighs against his uncle:

[a] At the parapets of the tower behold Garsion / And Soliman of Nicaea, his nephew Rubion.

[b] The first thing that Judas replied, / He said to him: "Never wert thou my nephew."

[c] "They call it Maudrane," Escorfaut replied, / "And Emaudras holds it, an accursed wretch; / He was born and conceived of my sister."

[d] "I will go back, for my nephew has accused me / Of cowardice, in the sight of all my army."

"Alas!" dist il, "cousin desbaraté,
Et qui s'en est par haulte mer tourné,
Ne vivré mes en paix en cest regné,
Quant cil me fault par qui g'estoye ayé." . . .
"Ja en Bretaigne n'en auray poesté,
Quant de mon oncle suy enxin degreppé." [a]
(*Acquin*, 2548, 2554)

At the conclusion of a disagreement between Tatice (Tatixos) and his uncle, the former cries:

"Mon oncle traï m'a,
Li cuivers empereres qui sa foi menti a.
Dame Diex le maudie qui le mont estora." [b]
(*Chanson d'Antioche*, II, 477)

The feelings of the Saracen uncle, on seeing or learning of the death of his nephew in battle, are as deeply affected as those of the French uncle; he faints and laments and gives way to his emotion in the same way; if there is any difference at all, it is that the poet gives much less space to the grief of the pagan uncle, and treats it with a degree less of sympathy:

Li niés Marsilie, il ad num Aelrot,
Tut premereins chevalchet devant l'ost . . .

Asez ad doel quant vit mort sun nevuld.[c]
(*Roland*, 1188, 1219)

[a] "Alas!" said he, "discomfited cousin, / Who has withdrawn over the high seas, / Nevermore shall I live in peace in this realm, / When he fails me by whom I was aided. . . . / Indeed, I shall have no power in Brittany, / When by my uncle I am thus forsaken."

[b] "My uncle has betrayed me, / The wretched emperor who has belied his faith. / May the Lord God curse him, who established the world."

[c] The nephew of Marsile (his name is Aelrot) / Rides first before the army. . . . / Much grief he feels, when he saw his nephew dead.

"Vostre niés est ocis, qui le courage ot fier."
Quant le voit l'amirans, n'i ot que courecier;
.iiii. fois se pasma sor son escu d'ormier.
Moult s'est haut escriés, quant vint au redrecier:
"Ahi! niés Clarion, tant vous avoie chier."[a]
(*Fierabras*, 4229)

"Perdu i ai Maprin, mon neveu le guerrier!"[b]
(*Gaufrey*, 8858)

"Perdu as Escorfan, le fiz de ta serour."[c]
(*Floovant*, 595)

Pris est sis niés, Clargis qu'il aimoit tant.
Con i l'antant, si demena duel grant.[d]
(*Narbonnais*, 7589)

But the mere lament is not all: it is the duty of the uncle or the nephew to avenge the death of the other, and we find a great many passages in which he either threatens or attempts vengeance; we might imagine these passages, if seen detached from the connection, to apply to the French, were it not for the uncouth pagan names and for the fact that usually satisfaction is not received by the avenger—he only loses his own life in addition. In the battle at Morligane, Anseïs kills the *aumachor ki tenoit d'Inde le rikeche et l'onor*[e] and the poet adds directly that *Guis ochist le fil de sa seror*[f] (*Anseïs de Cartage*, 2771, 2775). In *Gaufrey*, the pagan Faradin, nephew of Nasier, is killed by Robastre; the uncle swears vengeance: *Mes,*

[a] "Your nephew is slain, who was strong-hearted." / When the Emir sees him, he could not but grieve; / Four times he swooned upon his shield of pure gold, / Loudly he cried, when he came to rise: / "Ah, nephew Clarion, so dear I held you!"

[b] "I have lost Maprin, my nephew the warrior."

[c] "Thou hast lost Escorfant, thy sister's son."

[d] Captured is his nephew Clargis, whom he loved so much. / When he hears this, he gave way to great grief.

[e] Emir who held the power and the land of India.

[f] And Gui slew his sister's son.

foi que doi Mahom, chier sera comperée;[a] he has a long combat with Robastre, but is himself killed (3181 ff.).

Glorians l'apela, si l'aresonné:
" Vassal, per Mahommet! vous avés mal ouvré.
Mon neveu m'as ochis, comment fus si osé?
Ch'estoit .I. des meillors de la paienneté;
Mes par temps te sera moult chier guerredonné." . . .

" Le bon roi des Danois, mon neveu, m'a tué
Quant a Vauclere fu par forche marié;
Or le deliverroi son oncle Faussabré,
Et au frere Amandon le fort roi aresté;
Si en prendront venjanche tout a lor volenté."[b]
(*Gaufrey*, 1493, 1514)

" Mes Do nous a moult plus que n'a Garins grevé,
Il ochist mon neveu le Danois alosé,
A l'eure que il fu sus l'Aubigant alé."
" Mahom! est che cheli," chen respont Machabré,
" Qui ochist mon neveu que tant avoie amé?"[c]
(*Gaufrey*, 1574)

" Or voeil vengier mon oncle et son barné."[d]
(*Aliscans*, ed Halle, 6836)

[a] But, by the allegiance which I owe Mahomet, dearly will it be avenged.

[b] Gloriant called him and addressed him: / "Noble youth, you have wrought ill. / Thou hast slain my nephew, (how wert thou so daring?) / Who was one of the best in pagandom. / But in time it will be requited thee dearly. / The good king of the Danes, my nephew, he killed / When he was harassed by a troop at Vauclere; / Now I will deliver him to his uncle Faussabré, / And to the brother of Amandon, the powerful, determined king; / And they will take vengeance upon him at their pleasure."

[c] "But Doon much more than Garin has injured us; / He slew my nephew the honored Dane, / At the hour when he went against the Aubigant." / "Mahomet! Is that he," replies Machabré, / "Who slew my nephew whom I had loved so much?"

[d] "Now I want to avenge my uncle and his barons."

Molt menace Guillaume le conte poignéor,
Et dit quil li a mort le fil de sa seror.
Encor l'en occirra a son branc de color,
Se ne li rent sa terre, qui fu son ancessor.[a]
(*Foucon*, ed. Tarbé, p. 86)

"Mais tu m'es mort mon nevot Aucibier."
"Voir dites, sire," Aÿmers respondié,
"Je li copai a m'espee lou chief.
Que fais, paiens? panse de l'esploitier,
Ans de vengence ne fus mais si aissiés."[b]
(*Prise de Cordres*, 223)

Quant Jossiens voit mort Salatré son neveu,
Le cors en .ii. moitiés, ne peut muer ne plor:
"Mahon et Apolin, mal dehet aiés vous!
S'or ne faites justiche del quiver dolerous,
Qui m'a mort devant moi le fil de ma seror,
Le fer de ceste lance vous metrai el cors tout."[c]
(*Elie*, 448)

Par desor l'iaume fiert un Amoravi,
Qui tint Biterne et Pampelune ausi.
O cors li mist le fort espié forbi.
Devant son oncle le vellart Aupatri
L'a gité mort o pandant d'un larri.

[a] Much does the warrior count threaten Guillaume, / And he says that he has killed his sister's son. / He will yet slay him with his colored blade, / If he surrenders him not his land, which belonged to his grandfather.

[b] "But thou hast slain me my nephew Aucibier." / "You speak truly, sir," Aymer replied, / "I cut off his head with my sword. / What dost thou, pagan? Take care to make haste, / Never wert thou so within reach of vengeance."

[c] When Jossien sees Salatré his nephew dead, / His body in two halves, he cannot help but weep: / "Mahomet and Apollin, misfortune be upon you! / If now you take not judgment upon the sorry wretch, / The steel of this lance I shall put full into your body."

Grant duel an font sa gent et si ami.
"Niés," dist ses oncles, "con ai le cuer marri!
Se ne vos vanche, bien doi estre honi!" [a]
(*Narbonnais*, 6147)

Quant Solimans le voit de doel prist a fremir;
"Biaus niés," dist li soudans, "com vous i voi morir!
Se ne vous puis vangier ne doi terre tenir." [b] [112]
(*Chanson d'Antioche*, III, 110)

"Si va sus Kallemaine, qui vous ochist Bremant,
Ton oncle le gentil, a l'aduré talent." [c]
(*Gaufrey*, 1124)

Many of the most exciting combats in the French epic are undertaken in an attempt to avenge the death of uncle or nephew on one side or the other, and in this respect the poet readily acknowledges the bravery of the foreigner, even though he is usually worsted at the end. In *Jourdains de Blaivies*, the Saracens are at war with King Mark, and when one of the latter's men is killed, *moult en peza son neveu Elyot*,[d] who immediately slays the offender (1655). During the combat with Roland, Otinel, whose anger is at white heat, cries to him: *La mort mon oncle Fernagu te demant* [e] (*Otinel*, 420). As we

[a] Upon the helm he strikes an Amoravi, / Who held Biterne and Pampelune also. / Into his body he put his stout burnished spear. / Before his uncle, the old Aupatri, / He struck him dead, on the slope of a fallow field. / His people and his friends exhibit great grief. / "Nephew," said his uncle, "how sorry is my heart! / If I avenge you not, indeed I must be shamed!"

[b] When Solimant sees him, he began to quiver with grief; / "Fair nephew," said the Sultan, "how I see you dying there! / If I cannot avenge you, I must not hold my land."

[c] "And go at Charlemagne, who slew Bremant, / Your well-born uncle, of the practised will."

[d] It oppressed much his nephew Elyot.

[e] The death of my uncle Fernagu I require of you.

[112] The text reads *doit*.

have seen, Bradmund and his nephew Graunder pursue the escaping Bovon together, and when the former is killed, Graunder undertakes to avenge him:

> En haut se escrie, "Boefs, entendez,
> Einz ke jeo mangue en haut pendu serrez." [a]
> (*Boeve de Haumtone,* 1215)

Desier of Pavia goes on an expedition against Basin, who, as he says: *Mon oncle ocist, que j'avoie tant chier* [b] (*Auberi,* ed. Tarbé, p. 8). When Salazin finds his uncle wounded, he vows vengeance, crying:

> "C'est du neveus Guillaume, a qui Orenge apent,
> Par Mahomet mon Dieu, j'en panrai vengement." [c]
> (*Foucon,* ed. Tarbé, p. 94)

> Et respont l'amirans: "Mahomet te maudie!
> Que tu resambles bien Richart de Normendie,
> Cil qui m'ochist Corsuble et mon oncle Mautrie.
> Pléust a Mahomet que jou ci le tenisse;
> Ne mengeroie mais tant com seroit en vie." [d]
> (*Fierabras,* 2612)

> A tant es vous le fort roi Synagon.
> Quant il voit mort son oncle, a tel dolor,
> Par mautalent fiert Girart de Dijon,
> Cousin le roi de France le roion.[e]
> (*Moniage Guillaume,* 4247)

[a] Aloud he cries, "Bovon, listen, / Before I eat, you shall be hung up!"

[b] Slew my uncle, whom I held so dear.

[c] "It is on the nephew of Guillaume, to whom Orange belongs, / By Mahomet my God, I shall take vengeance for it."

[d] And the Emir replies: "Mahomet curse thee! / For thou resemblest much Richard of Normandy, / The one who slew Corsuble and my uncle Mautrie. / Would to Mahomet that I had him here; / I would not eat as long as he should live."

[e] Lo, the powerful King Synagon. / When he sees his uncle dead, he feels such grief, / In anger he strikes Girart of Dijon, / Cousin to the King of France the realm.

When Garin tries to purchase his release after being captured by the Saracens, the pagan Cadort refuses to accept any compensation, and insists upon having Vivien as hostage:

Ia nen aura son argent ne son or
Mais Vivien son chier fil au gent cors:
" Qar son ancestre a mon lignage mort
Chafaut mon pere et mon oncle Sadort." [a]
(*Enfances Vivien*, 25)

The pagan threatens Vivien with divers tortures in revenge for what the latter's grandfather did:

" Encor me mambre de mon pere Chaufart
Et de mon oncle l'aimiralt Golias." [b]
(*Enfances Vivien*, 509)

In one very unusual instance, the nephew does not even attempt to carry on the blood-feud, but pardons the death of his uncle; this is the pagan Karaheu, who is represented always as of a very high type of character:

Tost a François la faite pardonée
Qui ont ocis ses oncles e son pere.[c]
(*Chevalerie Ogier*, 2276)

In *Guibert d'Andrenas*, Aymeri liberates Baudus, whom he has just captured, on condition that he shall deliver up to him his uncle Judas; Baudus sends a messenger ahead to his uncle to announce the misfortune:

Cil est monte, n'i a plus atendu.
A Andernas va lo chemin batu.

[a] He will not have his silver nor his gold, / But Vivien, his dear son, fair of form: / "For his grandfather killed my family, / Chafaut my father, and my uncle Sadort."

[b] "I still remember my father Chaufart, / And my uncle the Emir Golias."

[c] He straightway pardoned the French, / Who slew his uncles and his father.

Treuve Judas, lo fort roi mescreü,
Conte li a et tot reconneü,
Comment il est son neveu avenu.
Judas l'oï, grant duel en a eü.
Il a jure Mahomet et Cahu,
Se il puet tenir Aymeri lo chanu,
Ne lo garra toz li or qui ainz fu.[a]
(ms. Brit. Mus., Bib. Reg., 20 B XIX, 157 v°)

Then Judas goes out to meet his nephew, and swears anew to avenge him. Thus among the foreigners the duty of vengeance very plainly devolves upon uncle and nephew.

Such a view of the solidarity between the Saracen uncles and nephews has all the more meaning when we consider how slight is the bond between father and son, father and daughter, and husband and wife. With the citations above may be compared the passages in *Aliscans* in which Renoart and his father are represented as fighting, hurling vituperation at each other, and seemingly lusting for the blood of their kin;[113] the readiness with which the pagans in *Roland* offer their sons as hostages, knowing that their speedy death is assured;[114] and the frequent betrayal of the father or the husband for the sake of the new French lover to whom the pagan daughter or wife takes a sudden fancy. Esclarmonde betrays her father Gaudisse in *Huon de Bordeaux;* Floripas demands the death of her father, the *amiral* Balan, in *Fierabras,* in order that she may depart with her lover, Gui de Bourgogne; Orable forsakes her

[a] He mounted, and waited no longer. / To Andernas he goes along the beaten road. / He finds Judas, the powerful pagan king, / Related and confessed all to him, / How it has gone with his nephew. / Judas heard him, and felt great grief. / He swore by Mahomet and Cahu, / If he can hold Aymeri the hoary, / Not all the gold that ever was will preserve him.

[113] *Aliscans,* ed. Jonckbloet, 6045, 6122, 6322; cf. also the episode from the *Bataille Loquifer* where Rainouart has the head of his father hung upon a pillar, cited by Runeberg, p. 86.

[114] *Roland,* 42, 54; cf. also the *Couronnement Louis,* 486.

husband Tibaut and embraces both Christianity and a new husband by marrying Guillaume, in the *Prise d'Orenge;* while Sebile, in the *Chanson des Saisnes,* is perhaps the most extreme type of the wanton wife. The poet apparently delights in severing the family ties of the enemy, yet withal, the bond between uncle and nephew is not impaired. The precept by which these fickle women are guided is formulated in one passage:

> Bien avés oi dire et as uns et as autres,
> Que feme aime tost home qui bien fiert en bataille.[a]
> (*Aiol,* 5596)

(*j*) *Family of Traitors*

In general the poetic treatment of the race of traitors is even more harsh than that of the pagans, yet here too the same solidarity is seen between uncle and nephew; it must be admitted, however, that the resentment of the poet against these traitors is deeper than against the Saracens, since he ascribes to them less magnanimity, more deceit and untrustworthiness, even in their dealings with one another. Still, the mutual dependence between uncle and nephew is marked, the same emotion appears in the presence of death, and the same view of the blood-feud is taken. As among the pagans, there are nephews galore, many of whom seem to be introduced into the poem for no other purpose than to increase the *dramatis personae,* if the theory is not accepted that the name 'nephew' offered to our mediaeval poets a concrete image of the closest type of family relations. In the twelfth century the legend of the *Roland,* which makes Ganelon closely related to the Emperor, was disregarded, and Grifon d'Hautefeuille was taken for the founder of the family, the father of Ganelon, while a numerous progeny was invented for literary purposes by the poets, in accordance with the mediaeval notions of hereditary

[a] Indeed you have heard one and another say, / That woman loves straightway a man who strikes hard in battle.

virtue and vice.[115] If we consider only the frequency with which nephews are introduced into the poems, the branches of this family tree would appear to be occupied by them to the exclusion of sons. A previous writer has called attention to the predilection of the poets for making any arch traitor a nephew of Ganelon: "Die Stellung als Neffe des Ganelon war überhaupt bei den jongleurs am beliebtesten, wenn es galt, einen Verräter als den leiblichen und somit auch als den geistigen Nachkommen Ganelon's zu kennzeichnen."[116] The relationship varies with the different poems, but each one is perfectly consistent in itself. A few salient examples of the various phases of the question must, as heretofore, suffice, since no new information is brought out by the poetical treatment of the race of traitors.

When Ganelon starts on his mission to Spain, we are told that *L'estreu li tint sis uncles Guinemers*[a] (*Roland*, 348); this is the only mention of Guinemer. Ganelon is connected with his various nephews in one way or another: *Et s'i est Ganelon et dant Hardré ses niés*[b] (*Gui de Bourgogne*, 1086); *Cil sont fil Pinabel et neveu Ganelon*[c] (*Aye d'Avignon*, 152); at the court of Charlemagne:

> .I. damoisel i ot, Hervieu l'apeloit on,
> Fix fu de la seror au cuvert Guenelon . . .
>
> "Hervieu," dist Amalgré, "je vous ai forment chier,
> Nous sommes d'un lignage et merveilleus et fier,
> En Guenelon nostre oncle ot moult bon chevalier."[d]
> (*Gui de Nanteuil*, 197, 231)

[a] His uncle Guinemer held the stirrup for him.

[b] And Ganelon and Sir Hardré his nephew are there.

[c] They are sons to Pinabel and nephews to Ganelon.

[d] A youth was there, Hervieu they called him, / He was the sister's son of the wretch Ganelon.... / "Hervieu," said Amalgré, "I hold you very dear; / We are of a race both marvellous and bold; / In Ganelon our uncle there was a very good knight."

[115] Cf. Gaston Paris, *Histoire Poétique*, p. 413.

[116] Sauerland, *Ganelon und sein Geschlecht*, p. 10.

When Auboin, on striking Garnier with a club, is rebuked by the Emperor, he expresses his willingness to go to hell, where he will be in agreeable company with his uncle Ganelon:

> "Se je vois en enfer, selon m'entencion,
> Je trouverai laiens mon oncle Ganelon,
> Pinabel de Sorence, et mon parent Guion;
> Nous seron moult grant geste en cele region."[a]
> (*Aye d'Avignon*, 704)

Amauguin disputes with Charlemagne over the possession of Aye, claiming the emperor's previous agreement to give her to his uncle Berenger: *Car la fame est mon oncle, et donnée li fu*[b] (*Aye*, 134), and it is Amauguin who announces to his uncle that his plan to marry Aye has failed (*Aye*, 93). The King attaches Hervieu to the line of traitors:

> "Vous estez du lignage ou moult a de felon;
> Assez le fist ja pis vostre oncle Guenelon."[c]
> (*Gui de Nanteuil*, 366)

Ganelon and Hardré are mentioned together:

> Atant se sunt drecié Guenelons et Hardrés.
> Cis Sires les maudie qui le mont a crié!
> Puis ne fu que .III. ans, ce dist on par verté,
> Qu'il traïrent les pers comme felon prouvé,
> Dont puis i moururent a doel et a viuté.[d]
> (*Fierabras*, 292)

[a] "If I go to hell, according to my opinion, / I shall find there my uncle Ganelon, / Pinabel de Sorence, and my relative Gui; / We shall be a large family in that region."

[b] For the woman is my uncle's, and was given to him.

[c] "You are of the line in which there are many knaves; / Full worse did your uncle Ganelon conduct himself."

[d] At once Ganelon and Hardré arose. / May the Lord curse them, who created the world! / It was only three years afterwards, so they say forsooth, / That they betrayed the peers, like perfect knaves, / For which they died later in suffering and in abjectness.

Hervieu and Amalgré plot together against Gui:

"Seignors," che dist Hervieu, "barons, conseilliez m'ent;
Nous sommes tuit neveu et cousin et parent." [a]
(*Gui de Nanteuil*, 581)

The barons beg Charlemagne not to engage in a combat with Doon, because they are related:

"Quer si cousin tuit sommes et de son parenté,
De par Guion son pere et son oncle l'ainsné." [b]
(*Doon de Mayence*, 6744)

In fighting with the Lorrains Fromondin will not abandon his uncle Guillaume de Monclin:

Et li preus Fromondins
Qui ne vialt mie son chier oncle guerpir;
Forment s'i fie, molt le tient por ami.[c]
(*Mort Garin*, 4006)

The Emperor requires hostages of Amaury and Huon, who tell conflicting stories as to the killing of his son Charlot, and the traitor Amaury offers an uncle and a cousin:

"Livrés ostaiges," dist Karles, "Amauris."
"Sire, vés la et Rainfroi et Henri;
L'uns est mes oncles et l'autres mes cosins." [d]
(*Huon de Bordeaux*, 1441)

When Charlemagne wishes to give Eglantine to Hervieu for wife, she objects, alleging his relationship to Ganelon as her reason:

[a] "My lords," thus spoke Hervieu, "barons, counsel me about it; / We are all nephews and cousins and relatives."

[b] "For we are all his cousins and his kin, / Through Gui his father, and his uncle, the eldest born."

[c] And the doughty Fromondin, / Who is all unwilling to abandon his dear uncle; / Greatly he relies upon him, and counts him his friend.

[d] "Give hostages," said Charles, "Amaury." / "Sire, behold both Rainfroi and Henri; / One is my uncle and the other my cousin."

"Sire," dist la pucele, "lessiés m'a vous parler;
Guenelon fu ses onclez, ne le puet nus cheler,
De la mort de mon frere n'ai je soig d'acorder,
Ne d'Enguelier mon oncle qui tant fist a loer." [a]
(*Gui de Nanteuil*, 801)

The examples of feuds and vengeance on behalf of the uncle or the nephew are many; Aiol gets into a quarrel with Makaire and kills a nephew of the latter who intervenes, whereupon Makaire calls upon his other nephews to avenge this murder;

Uns des neveus Makaire i est alés;
Fieus fu de sa seror, ch'oï conter . . .
"Ou estes vos," dist il, mes parentés?
Vos qui de moi tenés bours et chités,
Dont n'avés vous veü cest avolé,
Qui mon neveu m'a mort et afolé
Et a mes ieus voiant l'a chi tué?" [b]
(*Aiol*, 4402, 4430)

When the nephews take up the feud, Makaire is thrown into prison:

"Con nous somes trestout honi et vergongié,
Par un glouton estrainge cliné et abaisié.
Car par lui est mes oncles en cartre trebuchiés" . . .
Et por chou est Makaires lor oncles en prison,
Che furent si neveu et de sa norichon.[c]
(*Aiol*, 4619, 7203)

[a] "Sire," said the maid, "let me speak to you; / Ganelon was his uncle, none can conceal it. / For the death of my brother I have no desire to be reconciled, / Nor for Enguelier my uncle, who deserved so much praise."

[b] One of the nephews of Makaire went there; / His sister's son was he, as I have heard tell. . . . / "Where are you," said he, "my kin? / You who through me hold towns and cities, / Then did you not see this stranger, / Who has killed and abused my nephew, / And here before my eyes has slain him?"

[c] "How we are all shamed and disgraced, / By a strange knave,

Renars de Poitiers, *.i. traitor, qui Deus doinst encombrier,*[a] complains to the King that:

"Icil Garins, dont vous m'oiez plaidier,
Ocist mon oncle a l'espée d'acier.
Par cel Apostre, que requierent paumier,
Quant ne me puis de lor pere vangier,
Li fil por lui si le comparront chier."[b]
(*Girart de Vienne*, p. 22)

Fromont kills Girart, but the blood-feud is only a pretence to get his property; however, it is a valid excuse, as he states it:

"Fiuls fu Ami au vaillant chevalier
C'ocist mon oncle Hardré le droiturier
En la bataille por Amile le fier;
Por ce puis bien la guerre encommencier" . . .

"Mes oncles iert, s'en sui forment iriez" . . .

"C'est por mon oncle le prou conte Hardré
Qu'Amis ocist desouz Paris enz prés.
Mes oncles iert, si m'en doit molt peser."[c]
(*Jourdains*, 76, 98, 224)

low and degraded, / For by him is my uncle cast into prison." . . . / And for this is Makaire their uncle in prison, / That they were his nephews, and reared by him.

[a] A traitor, to whom may God give ill.

[b] "This Garin, of whom you hear me speak, / Slew my uncle with his sword of steel. / By that Apostle, whom palmers seek, / If I cannot take vengeance on their father, / The sons for him will dearly atone for it."

[c] "He was the son of Ami the valiant knight, / Who slew my uncle Hardré the upright, / In the battle for Amile the bold; / For this I can well begin the fight." . . . / My uncle was he, and I am deeply grieved." . . . / "It is for my uncle the brave Hardré, / Whom Ami slew in the meadows near Paris. / He was my uncle, and it must weigh heavy upon me."

When Fromont is conquered by Jourdain, the son of Girart, mercy is shown to all except Fromont and his nephew:

> Ne mais Foucart, que il fist bien serrer,
> Neveu Fromont, cui Dex puist bien craventer,
> Et les douz sers, dont oïstez parler . . .
>
> A un roncin ont Fromont atelé,
> Si le traïnnent contreval la cité,
> Et son neveu ont aprez traïnné.[a]
> (*Jourdains*, 4085, 4123)

In *Garin*, Fromont appeals to Odon to take vengeance for the death of his father, the latter's uncle:

> "Que dou roi suis par mautalent partis
> Et de Garin de Mez, le fil Hervi,
> Qui m'a mon pere destranchié et ocis,
> Il et ses niés d'Orlenois Hernaïs.
> Mors est mes peres, dont j'ai le cuer marri,
> Vostres chiers oncles qui souef vous norri."[b]
> (*Garin*, I, 146) [117]

[a] Except Foucart, whom he had confined, / Nephew to Fromont, whom may God overwhelm, / And the two servants, of whom you heard me speak. / They tied Fromont to a beast of burden, / And they drag him down through the city, / And his nephew they dragged after him.

[b] "From the King I am separated by ill-will, / And from Garin de Metz, the son of Hervi, / Who hacked and slew my father, / He and his nephew Hernaïs d'Orlenois. / Dead is my father, wherefore my heart is oppressed, / Your dear uncle who gently reared you."

[117] For an alphabetical list of the traitors in the various *Chansons*, see Sauerland.

CHAPTER IV

The Sister's Son

(*a*) *In the Chansons de Geste*

Thus far, in analyzing the poetic attributes of the uncle and nephew relationship, we have made no distinction between the paternal and the maternal side of the family. However, not only do the poets introduce the nephew in general as an important element of the epic story, but in the majority of cases they take particular pains to characterize him as the sister's son; if they do not do this in all cases when not prevented by the exigencies of the verse, it is probably because the original reason for the introduction of the nephew is lost sight of, and they are affected by the state of society of their own times, in which the family consists of father, mother, and children, while the children of the brother are on the same footing as those of the sister in all save perhaps a sentimental relation. The fact that the sister's son does have especial prominence in the French epic shows that as a tradition at least the connection between uncle and sister's son implies first great natural affection and second particularly close intimacy. Furthermore, it is the relations between these two that give the epic its human or dramatic interest; if the epic element of the *Chanson de Roland* has for its fundamental idea the battle of Roncevaux and its national consequences, the centre of gravity of the human interest lies in Roland and in the attitude of his uncle towards him—and Charlemagne, as the poet shows, is the maternal uncle of Roland. The same thing is true of other poems: the epic and dramatic interest are entirely different, and the dramatic element each time centres about an uncle and a sister's son. The Saxon war is one element of the *Chanson des Saisnes*, and the other has to do with the love adventures

of Baudoin, the interest of Charlemagne in him, and his attempt to secure his nephew in his position of ruler over the conquered race. The efforts of the hero of *Anseïs de Cartage* to subdue the inhabitants of his allotted fief yield their place as the main element of the poem towards the end of the story to the efforts of Anseïs to secure help from the Emperor; and although Charlemagne's influence is seen only at the beginning and at the end of the poem, yet all through it in the mixture of love, intrigue, and battles, Anseïs is the central figure. In *Gui de Bourgogne*, the martial element predominates, and although the Emperor and Gui are not working hand in hand at all times, nevertheless the influence of one upon the other unconsciously fills the poem. Now all these heroes are sister's sons of Charlemagne, according to the poetic legend, and in each case their fortunes and their relations with the uncle form the very sum and substance of the drama. Since the relations between the Emperor and these four nephews fall essentially into the same categories, as shown in the preceding chapter, we might be willing to accept the theory long ago promulgated that all this is due to the influence of the *Roland*, were it not true that all the details of these relations are found in other literatures, in history, and in primitive societies, so that it is plain that the reason for this glorification of the sister's son is to be sought farther back than mediaeval literature, or indeed literature at all, can reach, and that its appearance as an epic theme in the *Chansons de Geste* is only a manifestation of what was once a basic element of family life in the earliest stages of society, an element which comes down to the Middle Ages in the form of a tradition so well-established or rather so persistent that it becomes one of the predominant elements of the French epic.

These sister's sons may be roughly divided into three groups, according to their importance as a part of the story of the poem. The first group will consist of those who are protagonists, around whose adventures revolves the human interest of the entire plot; in this group are included the four nephews of Charlemagne mentioned above, Roland, Baudoin, Anseïs and

Gui. Here is to be placed Guillaume's nephew Vivien also, for in those poems of the Guillaume cycle in which he appears, his clinging trust in his uncle, the latter's heroic endeavor to succor him, and his ultimate fate and its effect upon Guillaume, form the main element of the story. [118]

The second group consists of those sister's sons whose connection with an uncle forms an integral part of the story, without detracting from the martial, that is, the epic interest. Here are to be placed Ogier, the sister's son of Naimon, Raoul de Cambrai, who bears the same relation to King Louis, Foucon, the nephew of Vivien, Gascelin, in *Auberi le Bourgoing,* Aiol, the nephew of Louis, and others.

The third group is very large, in which the nephews are introduced by the poet without much characterization; however, it is significant that he finds it necessary to indicate them at all as sister's sons, since so many of them do not affect the development of the story in any way whatever; the only reason then for their being brought thus carefully before the audience in their quality of sister's sons seems to be that thereby the poet makes an esoteric appeal to the sympathy of the audience and thus creates a factitious interest which the character himself does not arouse. In this group come many of the Saracens, traitors, a few more nephews of Charlemagne and of Guillaume, and a large number among whom neither uncle nor nephew is of any special interest to us modern readers. Those cases where the poet does not specifically characterize the nephew as a sister's son must for the purpose of this chapter be disregarded, although their study has served to reveal more fully the various general points of contact between uncle and nephew considered in a previous chapter. To restate a point already indicated: the poet does not realize the fundamental principle of the survival of which he feels the influence, otherwise when adapting the rôle of the sister's son to poetic purposes he would not allow

[118] The confusion in the legend which makes Vivien sometimes a brother's son of Guillaume is discussed on page 209; see also page 66 ff.

himself to be affected by actual conditions at the time of composition to the extent of allotting the same part to the brother's son. It is like some modern applications of old customs which long ago passed away in fact, and remain now only as more or less intelligible traditions adapted to modern environment. It appears then that while the general term 'nephew' has to the poet of the Middle Ages an especial significance, that of 'sister's son' implies a still closer connection. Two questions confront us here, why this is so, and how the poet makes it apparent. To answer the former it is necessary to go outside the field of the French epic, so that it seems best to consider the latter first, for which an intensive study of our texts suffices.

As is well known, Roland is the nephew of Charlemagne who receives the most attention at the hands of the poets; it is significant that his father is not once mentioned in the *Chanson de Roland* and that it is only the fact of his being sister's son to Charlemagne that counts. In the other poems his parentage varies; though his father is now one person, now another, and though his mother's name is not always the same, his relationship to the Emperor is constant. The identification is made each time without comment, and it is only by following the course of the story that we perceive the inner meaning of the term 'sister's son.' It has seemed best to group such passages, as well as similar identifications of other nephews, in an Appendix, and to discuss here only those passages which make a distinct reference to the prominent position of the sister's son.

As a last argument against being sent to Spain as the Emperor's messenger, Ganelon makes use of his relationship to Charlemagne; he has married the Emperor's sister—Roland's mother—and by her has a son, Baudoin, whom he commends to the care of the uncle:

> "En Sarraguce sai bien qu'aler m'estoet:
> Hum ki la vait repairier ne s'en poet.
> Ensurquetut si ai jo vostre soer.

Si 'n ai un filz, ja plus bels n'en estoet:
C'est Baldewins, se vit, ki ert prozdoem.
A lui lais jo mes honurs e mes fieus.
Guardez le bien, ja ne l' verrai des oilz." [a]
(*Chanson de Roland,* 292)

Speaking of this Baudoin, the Saxons call him the nephew of Charlemagne, his sister's son, and add that he must be very dear to him:

" C'est li niés Karlemaine, tres bien l'os afiier,
De sa seror germaine, molt le doi[t] avoir chier." [b]
(*Chanson des Saisnes,* LXVII, 29)

When Baudoin's death is announced to Charles, the messenger cries out: " Baudoin is slain, your sister's son," the implication being that the Emperor's grief will be all the keener:

Li mes la vint poignant desor .i. chaceor;
" Amperere de Rome, or croist nostre dolor:
Baudoins est ocis, fiz de vostre seror." [c]
(*Saisnes,* CCLIX, 9)

Ganelon has another son, Maucion, who appears only in the *Gui de Bourgogne;* when an election is held for a temporary ruler of France during the absence of the Emperor, this Maucion recites his claims, emphasizing the fact that he is sister's son to Charlemagne:

" E si est mun pere Guenes, k'od Karlon est alez;
Sa serur ad a femme, si ke ben le savez:

[a] "To Saragossa I know well that I must go; / He who goes there cannot return. / Above all, I have your sister. / And I have a son by her, one does not need a finer; / That is Baudoin, who, if he lives, will be a doughty knight. / To him I leave my lands and my fiefs. / Guard him well, I shall not see him more."

[b] "He is the nephew of Charlemagne, I venture to assert it, / By his sister, and dear must he hold him."

[c] The messenger came spurring upon a courser; / "Emperor of Rome, now our grief increases; / Baudoin is slain, your sister's son."

Pur ce dei en France estre haltement coronez."[a]
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* p. 137)

The influence of the sister's son at court is brought out by a passage from the *Girart:*

Girars avoit a court de ceulz qui consoillent
Le roi, mains malvuillans qui de mort le hayoient:
Les filz au duc d'Ardene et neveux le roi Charle,
Effens de sa soreur, c'est de quoi je parle.[b]
(*Girart de Roussillon,* 693)

The trouble into which Gaufroi has gotten with the Emperor is all the more annoying to Naimon since Gaufroi had married his sister, and their son Ogier is dear to the uncle:

Quant li dux Namles sot ce grant destourbier,
Bien poez croire, mult li dut anuier,
Car eüe ot sa seror a moillier
Icis Gaufrois dont ci m'oez raisnier;
N'en ot c'un fill, on l'apeloit Ogier.[c]
(*Enfances Ogier,* 97)

The poet of *Aiol* seems to make it an important point that he knows who the Count of Bourges is, whom Aiol captures for Louis, that he is the sister's son of Elie, and that he is warring with the king on account of the latter's injustice to his uncle; apparently, since the relationship has not been indicated before,

[a] "And my father is Ganelon, who has gone with Charles; / His sister he has to wife, as well you know; / For this I must be openly crowned in France."

[b] Girart had at court those who counsel / The King, many ill-wishers who hated him to death: / The sons of the Duc d'Ardenne and nephews to King Charles, / Children of his sister, that is of what I speak.

[c] When Duke Naimon learned of this great trouble, / You may well believe, it must have vexed him, / For he had his sister to wife, / That Gaufroi of whom you hear me speak here; / He had only one son by her, he was called Ogier.

the poet makes the announcement here with the intention of appealing to the sympathy of his hearers for the unknown Count:

Signor, chis gentiex quens que je vos di,
Dont ne savés qu'il fu ne dont il vint,
Poi est de jougleors quil vous desist:
Il ne sevent l'estoire ne n'ont apris;
De chou sont li auquant molt escarni
Et li plussor s'en font por fol tenir,
Quant le veraie estoire n'en ont coisi:
Hon qui raison commenche, jel sai de fi,
Quant il al daerain n'en set issir,
Por fol et por musart s'en fait tenir.
Mais je vos dirai bien dont li quens vint
Et de con faite gent: je l'ai apris.
Ja fu che niés Elie le duc gentil
Qui a tort fu cachiés de son pais,
Fieus Marsent sa seror o le cler vis,
Cousins germains Aiol dont je vos di.
Por chou guereoit il roi Loeys
Qu'il encacha son oncle fors del pais.[a]
(*Aiol*, 3210)

The Count himself laments his inability to restore his uncle's rights to him:

[a] My lords, that gentle count of whom I tell you, / Of whom you know not who he was nor whence he came, / Few minstrels are there who could tell you; / They do not know the story and have not learned it; / For that some are derided / And the greater part are considered fools, / When they have not perceived the true story; / A man who begins a tale, I know forsooth, / When he knows not how to finish it, / Makes them consider him a stupid fool. / But I will tell you whence came the count, / And of what race: I have learned it. / He was indeed nephew to Elie, the gentle duke, / Who was wrongfully driven from his land; / The son of Marsent, his sister, fair of face, / Cousin german to Aiol of whom I tell you. / For this he was warring with King Louis, / That he drove his uncle from the country.

"Elies, biaus dous oncles, je sui honis.
A tort fustes cachiés de ces pais:
Si vous desireta rois Loeys.
Je sui fieus vo seror, se Dex m'ait,
Dame Marsent la bele o le cler vis." [a]
(*Aiol*, 3309)

Of the affection which binds an uncle to his sister's sons we are told when the poet enumerates the descendants of Aymeri, among whom are four sons of Guillaume's eldest sister:

Qui tant aiderent Guillaume le guerrier,
Crestienté firent molt essaucier;
Forment les dut Guillaumes avoir chier;
Neveu furent au conte.[b]
(*Aymeri de Narbonne*, 4626)

Guillaume himself unconsciously sums up the contents of several poems, in a courteous but heartfelt reproach which he addresses to Louis, reminding him that it is through serving him that he has lost his dearest relative, his sister's son, Vivien:

"Loëys sire, je vos tien a seignor.
Doné m'avez grant paine et grant honor:
Perdu en ai lo fil de ma seror,[119]
De ma meisnee lo balais et la flor." [c]
(*Foucon*, ed. Schultz-Gora, 7736)

[a] "Elie, gentle uncle, I am shamed. / Wrongfully were you driven from this region, / And King Louis disinherited you. / I am your sister's son, so may God help me, / Lady Marsent the fair and bright-faced."

[b] Who aided Guillaume the warrior so much, / And much exalted Christianity; / Deeply must Guillaume have loved them; / Nephews were they to the Count.

[c] "Louis, Sire, I hold you my master, / You have given me great sorrow and great honor; / I have lost through it my sister's son, / The fairest and the flower of my household."

[119] The ms. of London, fol. 284, r°, reads: *Perdus en ai les fils de ma serour, / De ma mesnie le barnage et la flor.*

The grief of other uncles at the death of their sister's sons is equally keen, and the way of recording the death in battle sometimes shows by inference the depth of this sentiment. For instance, when the poet tells us that in the battle of Morligane Anseïs kills the *Aumaçour,* and immediately adds: *Et Guis ochist le fil de sa seror*[a] (*Anseïs de Cartage,* 2775), it is evident that he wishes to point out the closeness of the connection between them. A similar case is when Gui kills the nephew of Tibaut:

> Gui de Doai—fox demande meillor—
> Fiert devant lui lo fil de sa seror.[b]
> (*Foucon,* 3283)

Ysoré, King of Corinth, rages when he hears of the defeat of his maternal uncle Synagon:

> Grant doel en ot li glos en son corage
> —Car Synagons estoit de son lignage,
> Frere sa mere,—s'en ot au cuer la rage.[c]
> (*Moniage Guillaume,* 4642)

Louis reports to his barons the threats of Tibaut against Guillaume for killing his sister's son:

> "Molt menace Guillaume le conte poignéor,
> Et dit quil li a mort le fil de sa seror.
> Encor l'en ocirra a son branc de color,
> Se ne li rent sa terre, qui fu son ancessor."[d]
> (*Foucon,* ed. Tarbé, p. 86)

[a] And Gui slew his sister's son.

[b] Gui de Douai—only a fool would ask for a better— / Strikes down before him his sister's son.

[c] At this the knave had great grief in his heart, / For Synagon was of his lineage, / His mother's brother; he had wrath in his heart.

[d] "He threatens much Guillaume the warrior count, / And says that he killed his sister's son, / And that he will slay him with his colored blade, / If he does not restore his land, which was his grandfather's."

The same attitude is seen in the threat of the Saracen Jossien, whose sister's son has been slain by Elie.[120]

The association of the nephew with his maternal uncle is alluded to in several passages; when Aymer de Losengne is slain, his sister's son, who is fighting in the same fray, steps at once into his place, is knighted, and receives his uncle's possessions and avenges him as a matter of course:

D'Aymer est la perte recovrée,
Le bon vassal qui la vie a finée,
Cist est ses niés, fiz sa seror l'ainnée;
Bien doit tenir la terre et la contrée
Qui fu son oncle a la chiere menbrée.[a]
(*Aymeri de Narbonne,* 1881)

Begon de Belin, when besieged by the enemy, calls upon his sister to despatch her son to his aid:

"Ma seror dites qu'elle m'envoit son fis
Et son nevou, dant Jofroi l'Angevin."[b]
(*Garin,* II, 102)

Fromont, notwithstanding that he is the enemy of Begon, is angered at his death, and threatens his own nephew, who has done the deed, but is prevented from striking him by Guillaume de Monclin, who reminds him of the consideration due his sister's son:

"Non ferez, frere," li quens Guillaumes dit,
"Il est tes niés et de ta seror fis."[c]
(*Garin,* II, 248)

[a] Of Aymer is the loss replaced, / The good youth whose life has ended; / This is his nephew, son of his eldest sister; / He must surely have the land and the domain / Which belonged to his uncle with the prudent look.

[b] "Tell my sister that she send me her son / And her nephew, Sir Jofroy the Angevin."

[c] "You shall not do it, brother," Count Guillaume said, / "He is your nephew, and the son of your sister."

[120] Cited on page 186.

Guischart and his nephew Foucon, who are engaged in avenging the death of Vivien, Foucon's uncle, are brought together by the poet all through the poem:

> Guischarz et Folque, li fiz de sa seror,
> Sovent i metent lor verz branz de color,
> Kar tel costume orent lor ancessor.[a 121]
> (*Foucon*, 2972)

The connection between Garnier and his sister's sons is so close that they abandon their fathers for the sake of the uncle.[122] In the story of the Birth of the Knight of the Swan, King Lotaire has a nephew at court, his sister's son, who unwittingly shoots at the swans in the royal garden; the King is so angry, despite his fondness for Plantol, that he rushes at him with a knife, but is restrained by the courtiers:

> Plantols, uns chevaliers qui ert de sa maisnie,
> Molt l'ama; ses niés ert, de sa seror joïe.[b]
> (*Elioxe*, 1639)

> Plantols n'ot mie oï ceste manace faire;
> Niés ert le roi Lotaire, et frans et debonaire.[c]
> (*Elioxe*, 2119)

> Li rois en vaut ocire son neveu avantier,
> Por çou que il i traist une fois d'arc manier.[d]
> (*Elioxe*, 2451)

The earlier poems of the French mediaeval period have indubitably a different treatment of the nephew tradition from

[a] Guischart and Foucon, the son of his sister, / Often use their blades flashing green, / For such a custom had their ancestors.

[b] Plantol, a knight of his household, / Much did he love him; he was his nephew by his favorite sister.

[c] Plantol did not hear this threat made; / He was nephew to King Lotaire, and noble and gentle.

[d] The King wanted to slay his nephew day before yesterday, / Because he drew his short-bow once.

[121] *Costume*, i. e., the association in battle of uncle and nephew.

[122] For citation, see page 71.

that of the later ones—the greater part of them make nothing of the relationship of father and son, and when the nephew, who is frequently the main character of the story, is introduced, he is usually a sister's son; in the later poems of the thirteenth century the brother's son is on the same footing, while greater importance is given to the rôle of the father. As seen above, the general allusions to the importance of the sister's son in his uncle's life are not many, but as the treatment of the poet is objective so far as his limitations allow, we must bear in mind that he voices his sentiments mainly in the deeds of his characters rather than by dogmatizing, and that the pains which he takes to indicate a character as *le fiz sa seror* and the tendency to make this relationship the fulcrum of his dramatic action are of equal weight with any general statements that he may choose to make. We have a good example of the change in the nephew tradition in the legend of Vivien; in the earlier poems he appears as the son of Guillaume's sister, while in the *Enfances Vivien,* which is much later than the *Cançun de Willame* or the *Aliscans,* he appears as the son of Guillaume's brother Garin.[128] The tradition being broken in this respect, it is not surprising that the poet makes Guillaume say, when deciding that Vivien shall take his father's place in prison:

> "Nevos et oncles, parens sont il asses,
> Mais un sien freire ne puet on recovrer."[a]
> (*Enfances Vivien,* 337)

[a] "Nephews and uncles are very close relatives, / But one cannot replace his brother."

[128] Vivien is the sister's son of Guillaume, according to the *Cançun de Willame,* the *Willehalm* of Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Foucon,* the narrative of Alberic des Trois Fontaines, and verse 34 of the *Aliscans* in the Halle edition, where the reading *et a Guillaume le fil de sa seror* is decidedly to be preferred over the *lui et Tacon le fil de sa seror* of the ms. utilized in the Jonckbloet edition; Vivien is the son of Garin, according to the *Enfances Vivien,* the *Covenant Vivien, Aymeri de Narbonne,* and the *Nerbonesi.* See Weeks, "The Newly Discovered Chançun de

This impairing of the sacredness of the nephew relation is an evidence of late writing; and yet in the same poem we find the utmost harmony between Guillaume and his nephew. The inconsistency seems to be due to the loss of the real significance of the term 'sister's son'; the first step is the placing of the brother's son on the same footing, and then comes a quick transition into the modern conception of the inner family. When Foucon claims his right as Vivien's nephew to avenge his death, telling his mother, Vivien's sister: *Tos jors l'oi dire: ains venge niés que fraire*[a] (Foucon, 537), it is made clear that there was a well-defined tradition regarding the duties of the nephew, and when we find the same thing in *Aye d'Avignon: Por ce dit on encore: ains venge nies que fis*[b] (2667), the matter is clinched. Yet although the axiom is familiar to the poet, he seemingly cannot reconcile it to his knowledge of family life, for instead of making the incident of his story illustrate the old saying, it seems to him that his legend is the origin of the axiom. That is, he makes Alori and Guichart warn their uncle Garnier of the plot of their fathers against him, their maternal uncle, and makes them join Garnier in fighting against their fathers; the poet finds this proceeding incongruous and tries to find in it the origin of the saying, claiming that on account of it people still say that it is the duty of the nephew rather than of the son to take vengeance. He goes still farther in his attempt to harmonize the situation with his own ideas of propriety by making the fathers belong to the breed of traitors, while the uncle is an oppressed and virtuous hero. The hero of *Auberi*, praising his sister's son Gascelin for his long-continued devotion and faithfulness, calls to

[a] I always hear it said: rather does nephew than brother take vengeance.

[b] For this they still say: rather does nephew than son take vengeance.

Willame,'' *Modern Philology*, 1904–5, pp. 239–240. In consultation, Professor Weeks expresses the opinion that the reading of the *remanieur* is manifestly to be rejected.

mind another axiom which shows the poet's conception of this relationship:

"Par mainte fois l'ai oï regehir,
Mieus vaut bons niés, ce dist on sans mentir,
Que tel enfant puet on souuent nourir." [a]
(*Auberi, ed.* Tobler, 54, 17)

Tibaut, the nephew of the Saracen Desramé, voices another side of the question when he declares his intention of continuing a battle which his uncle wishes to abandon, and says to him:

Dist li niés: "Oncles, ja mes n'avroiz honor,
S'el champ laissiez lo fil vostre seror." [b]
(*Foucon,* ed. Schultz-Gora, 8184)

The occasional characterization of the nephew as the son of the eldest sister is of a certain importance, for where Mother-right prevails, a nephew of that particular degree often has more prerogatives than do those by other sisters; unfortunately, these indications in the *Chansons de Geste* are always in rhyme, so that an argument based on them alone is hardly possible. Taken in connection with other indications, however, this point has a bearing on our theory. For instance, Rainald de Peiter, a nephew of Willame, is called *un sun neuov de sa seror primer* (*Willame,* 2541); speaking of the pagan king Aarofle, the poet tells us that Renoart was *fils sa seror, l'ainz née* (*Aliscans,* 294); Renoart himself has a nephew, Bauduc, who is called *niés Renoart, fiz sa seror l'ainz née* (*Aliscans,* 5377); the loss of Aymer, the squire of Foucon de Poitier, is replaced by a squire of whom the poet says: *cist est ses niés, fiz sa seror l'ainnée* (*Aymeri,* 1883).

These slight hints are all that we have to show that the poets themselves ever felt the need of accounting for the mutual consideration which they attribute to maternal uncle and nephew;

[a] "Many a time have I heard it declared: / Better is a good nephew, so they said in truth, / Than any child one can bring up."

[b] Said the nephew: "Uncle, nevermore would you be honored, / If you should leave on the field your sister's son."

they probably did not really grasp the significance of its manifestation, but accepted the relationship as sufficient to account for the situation. It is impossible to say with precision that the sister's son predominates in the earlier *Chansons* and loses ground in the later ones, because we cannot tell how much of our material is native to the earliest versions of any poem: that the brother's son does assume prominence in some of the early ones is shown by the character of Bertrand in the *Couronnement Louis* and the *Charroi de Nimes*, while the late *Enfances Ogier* bring out the essential relations between uncle and sister's son as well as some of the earlier poems.[124] The poetic development of the material is still enveloped in uncertainty, but we may assume that the earliest legends made much of the sister's son and that the whole period of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries knew this without understanding it, and thus unconsciously developed the tradition until maternal and paternal nephews alike were looked upon as good material for embodying the human interest in the epic poems.

The question as to why the sister's son appears to fill the poetic need of a character standing close to the central figure of the various divisions of a cycle is usually answered by referring to the prototype Roland. But then another question, equally difficult, arises: why was Roland in the first place represented as the sister's son of Charlemagne? It has been suggested that as the legend about his deeds grew and the poets desired to connect him as closely as possible with the Emperor under whom he served, they deliberately set to work to invent an arbitrary relationship, since they could not violate history so far as to make him a son, which should be next to that of son. This is theorizing, of course, without examination of the circumstances; a comparative examination of the legend induces the belief that as the story evolved, making the relations between the Emperor and Roland more and more personal, the

[124] As regards Bertrand, in the *Pèlerinage Charlemagne* he calls Hernaut de Gironde his uncle (565), while no mention is made of relationship to Bernart, who is in other poems his father.

poets ascribed to the two a relationship that was even closer than that between father and son, as the most natural thing to do. There is no historical basis that justifies making Roland the sister's son of Charlemagne, but as we shall see, there is a sociological justification; nor is there anything but poetic information as to the connection between the other oncles and nephews of the *Chansons*. The only historical reference to Roland is found in Eginhard, who states that he was a prefect of the Marches of Brittany, and perished in the battle at Roncevaux in Navarre.[125] The entire poetic theme is evidently a pure invention, but it is not a violent and phenomenal use of arbitrary methods, but rather the easiest way of making intelligible to an audience relations which, thus characterized, were natural in the eyes of the mediaeval world. And what applies to Charlemagne and Roland applies equally well to all the others.

Some credence has been attached to a certain legend of Roland's birth which makes him the son of Charlemagne by his own sister, as an explanation of the position which he occupies in the mediaeval epic. But this would not account for the similar poetic treatment of so many other nephews; however, it must be considered. Among the many scandalous legends which grew up soon after the death of the historical Charlemagne was one which attributed to him incestuous intercourse with his sister Gille or Berte, as a result of which she gave birth to Roland shortly after her marriage to Milon.[126] This legend appears not to have been so current as one which attributed to the Emperor a great sin, not specified, but one which tormented his conscience so grievously that he found no peace in life. None of the early French epics makes use of this legend of Roland's birth, although in *Huon de Bordeaux* there

[125] Eginhard, *Vie de L'Empereur Charles*, trans. from the Latin by A. Teulet, p. 14.

[126] This matter is discussed in detail by Gaston Paris, *Histoire Poétique*, pp. 378 ff., and in his Introduction to *La Vie de Saint-Gilles*, p. lxix ff.

is a reference to an unconfessed sin which prevents the Emperor from drinking out of the magic cup of Auberon, a cup to be used only by the pure and sinless.[127] The *Karlamagnus-Saga,* the prose romance of Berte, and the *Chronique de Weihenstephan* all mention the first theory as stated above as the sin of the Emperor, while the author of *Tristan de Nanteuil* arrives at the same conclusion as does the Icelandic saga, only he states it hypothetically:

> Le peché fu orribles, on ne le sot neant;
> Mais ly aucun espoirent, et tous ly plus sachant,
> Que ce fut le peché quant engendra Roulant
> En sa sereur germaine, se va on esperant;
> Car il n'est nul qu'au vrai vous en voit recordant;
> Mais ensement le vont plusieurs signifiant.[a]
> (Ms. Bib. Imp. 75535, fol. 311 v°) [128]

This fourteenth century poem is of so late origin that the adoption of a legend which the other epics disregard may indicate that by that time it seemed necessary to justify or rather to account for an affection which the earlier poems found perfectly natural between an uncle and a sister's son. The compiler of the *Reali di Francia* had heard of this legend, and indignantly dismisses it as untrue:

> "Carlo lo amava tanto che lo teneva come suo proprio figliuolo adottivo, intantochè volgarmente fu detto che Orlandino era figliuolo di Carlo, la qual cosa è contraria al vero; e amaval il re per la sua virtù e perchè lo vedeva valeroso dell' animo e della persona." [129]

[a] The sin was horrible; it was not known at all; / But some surmise, and all the most learned, / That it was the sin when he begot Roland / Upon his sister, so they surmise. / For there is none who goes reporting this to you for a certainty, / But several go thus indicating it.

[127] *Huon de Bordeaux,* 10217 ff.

[128] Cited in *Histoire Poétique,* p. 381, and in *La Vie de Saint Gilles,* p. CIX.

[129] *Reali di Francia,* ed. of Gamba (1821), p. 479.

Another question arises, whether the poets may not intend to imply sometimes that the paternity of their heroes is so uncertain that a man's affection turns from his sons to his sister's sons, whom he knows to be of his own blood. Although doubt does seemingly exist in some cases, this explanation is insufficient on general grounds. The epic father occasionally asseverates his belief in the legitimacy of his sons, *les filz de nos moilliers*, and occasionally the legitimacy is questioned. Thus for example Ami says of his children: *De moi sont il, por voir le puis conter*[a] (*Amis et Amiles*, 2938). Charlemagne becomes angry with his son Louis because the boy does not display the independent spirit which he expects in his heir, and in his violent outburst of temper he casts suspicion upon his wife:

> Et l'empereres fu moult grams et iriez.
> "Ha las!" dist il, "com oi sui engigniez!
> Delez ma fame se coucha pautoniers
> Qui engendra cest couart héritier.
> Ja en sa vie n'iert de moi avanciez:
> Qui en feroit roi ce seroit péchiez."[b]
> (*Couronnement Louis*, 91)

Much the same attitude is taken by Aymeri, who vows, when his wife Hermanjart sends money to assist her exiled sons upon their way, that if they accept this gift they are not his offspring:

> "Jes proverai, ançois que past le jor,
> S'il a en eulx ne bonté ne valor.
> Se l'avoir prannent, par Dieu le mien segnor,
> Je dirai bien, qui qo tiengne a iror,
> Que i sont filz d'aucun losanjeor
> Que avec vos cochastes par folor.

[a] Mine they are, I can state it in truth.

[b] The Emperor was much grieved and angry. / "Alas!" said he, "how I am deceived today! / With my wife lay some varlet, / Who begot this cowardly heir. / Never in his life will he be advanced by me; / If one should make him king, it would be a sin.

Mes s'il ranvoient les mulez sans demor
Et il batoient les sergenz par fieror,
Tant que livré fussent a grant dolor,
Donques diroie, par Dieu le criator,
Qes angendra Aymeri le contor,
Cil de Nerbone a la fiere vigor,
Si sanbleront de cuer et de valor
A nostre fier linage."[a]
(*Narbonnais*, 774)

As a matter of fact, the insulted sons do send back the money and refuse all assistance from the father who had banished them, and old Aymeri, delighted, embraces his wife and cries:

"Dame," fet il, "or sai de veritez
Qu'i sont mi fil et ques ai angendrez."[b]
(*Narbonnais*, 923)

Such outbursts are not to be taken seriously; the suspicion is not a direct, but a hypothetical one, and yet we may conclude that such doubts would be justifiable in some cases, to judge by the demeanor which the poet chooses to attribute to the many amorous ladies of the *Chansons*.[130] A notable instance is found in a curious passage of the *Chanson des Saisnes* (LXXIV–LXXVI), in which there is a detailed account of the wantonness of the barons' wives who remain at Saint-Hubert during

[a] "I shall test them, before the day be past, / If there be in them either merit or valor. / If they take the money, by my Lord God, / I shall surely say, whoever may consider it is in passion, / That they are sons of some flatterer, / With whom you lay through folly. / But if they send back the mules without delay, / And beat the servants through passion, / So that they should be given up to great pain, / Then I would say, by God the Creator, / That Aymeri the Count begot them, / He of Narbonne of the terrible vigor, / And that they will resemble in courage and in valor / Our bold race."

[b] "Lady," quoth he, "now I know in truth, / That they are my sons and that I begot them."

[130] Cf. Gautier, *Epopées Françaises*, Vol. III, passim.

the Saxon war, disporting themselves with the squires and the menials of the army.

All these tentative explanations are insufficient to account for the persistence with which the uncle-nephew relations are developed throughout the epic, and there is really no internal evidence that gives the reason. Our difficulty in projecting ourselves into the spirit of the period is only increased by an examination of the bare facts of the epic, piled one upon the other in crude colors which give no subtle distinction to the various nephews, no plastic quality to any individual, but serve only to accentuate the phenomenon. And yet it is not an isolated phenomenon: the same treatment of the sister's son is found in the Arthurian legends, in Germanic, Celtic, even in Indo-Iranian folklore, and these various manifestations correspond so closely to certain phases of that primitive state of society known as the Matriarchal System that we are but following the line of least resistance in seeking in Mother-right the explanation of the curious aspect of family life which we have been observing in the French epic.

(*b*) *In Other Branches of Literature*

Although the relations between nephew and maternal uncle are not to so great an extent an integral part of the romances of the Arthurian cycle as of the legends of the French epic, they nevertheless play a part of considerable importance. It is obviously unnecessary here to go into the minute details that have been examined in the epic, and a very recent article by Professor Nitze, which calls attention to the frequent appearance of the theme in the Grail legend, while it anticipates some statements that would otherwise be made here, is an excellent reference for this phase of the subject.[181] The emphasis which the position of maternal uncle is given in the *Perceval le Gallois* of Chrétien is much greater than in the later German version of *Parsival* by Wolfram von Eschenbach, and many

[181] W. A. Nitze, "The Sister's Son and the Conte del Graal," reprinted from *Modern Philology*, IX, No. 3, January, 1912.

details of the earlier poem, such as the neglect to mention the father's name and the introduction of numerous relatives on the mother's side, combine to accentuate the importance of matrilinear descent in the legend. The Grail King is the maternal uncle of Perceval, as is also the Hermit; Professor Nitze remarks that "a closer male relative Perceval could not have had." The article gives also confirmatory testimony from other romances; Tristan is the sister's son of King Mark, so that his betrayal of his uncle is made to appear all the blacker:

> "Dex! Tant m'amast mes oncles chiers,
> Se tant ne fusse a lui mesfait."[a]
> (*Tristan*, version of Béroul, vs. 2170)

So in the *Roman de Brut*, the author denounces Mordred's betrayal of his uncle Arthur:

> Oiés quel honte e quel vilté;
> Ses niés, fils sa seror estoit.[b]
> (*Brut*, 13422)

In *Partenopeus de Blois*, the King's nephew is dearer to him than his own son:

> Un sien neveu avoit li rois,
> Cuens fu d'Angiens et cuens de Blois;
> Fils ert Lucrece sa seror.
> Li rois l'amoit de tel amor
> Que nis son fil de sa moillier
> N'avoit il de niënt plus chier.[c]
> (*Partenopeus*, ed. Crapelet, I, p. 19) [132]

[a] "God! So much would my dear uncle have loved me, / If I had not wronged him so much."

[b] Hear what shame and what vileness; / His nephew, his sister's son was he.

[c] The king had a nephew, / Count was he of Angers and Count of Blois; / He was son to Lucrece his sister. / The king loved him with such love / That not even his son by his wife / Did he hold dearer in any wise.

[132] Professor Nitze states also that the obligation of vengeance

The resemblance has been noted often between the sinister legend of Roland's birth and the story that Mordred is Arthur's son by his sister; in the *Beowulf*, too, Fitela is Sigemund's son by his sister Signy, states Dr. Hart in his *Ballad and Epic*.

An equally close connection between uncle and nephew is discussed by Professor Gummere in his article on the sister's son in the English and Scottish popular ballads, in which we see that many of the popular heroes are sister's sons, and that the maternal uncle frequently stands in the place of a father to them.[133] Professor Gummere concludes that these survivals point to a primitive law; the ballads show traces of the older family system together with the new, in which the son is of more account, but in the earlier works preference is clearly given to the sister's son. Near the end of *Chevy Chase* we find:

> Sir Davye Tindale that worthè was,
> His sister's son was he.

In the *Beowulf* much weight is given to the relationship of Beowulf to his maternal uncle Hygelac, and to his claims upon him by virtue of that. The sister's son is introduced continually in Layamon's *Brut*. In Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* there are many sister's sons of greater or less importance in the story; Arthur's nephews Mordred and Gawain of course are the most prominent; in the popular ballads about Arthur, too, much mention is made of the sister's son.

is brought out in Chrétien's *Yvain*, and cites the verses addressed by Yvain to Calogrenant, 588 ff.

> "Car se je puis et il me loist,
> J'irai vostre honte vangier."

There seems to be no indication that this applies to a nephew, however, for the statement of Yvain in 582 is:

> "Vos estes mes cosins germains,
> Si nos devons mout antramer."

Unless the relationship is indicated more clearly in other poems, it would seem best to interpret *cosins* as 'cousins.'

[133] The *Furnivall Miscellany*, pp. 133–149.

Dr. Murray Potter, in his valuable book on combats between father and son, refers incidentally to many cases in mediaeval and in ancient literature where the maternal uncle takes charge of the rearing of the child, who afterwards avenges his death.[184]

Besides these three studies which treat of the sister's son as a literary theme, taking up the examination of a limited phase of the question, many writers on Sociology have had occasion to refer to the frequent appearance of the sister's son in other lands; as the majority of such writers have been Germans, it is natural that they should refer particularly to the oldest Germanic traditional literature. It has been shown that both in the oldest monuments and in the later poems of the Middle Ages there is an uncommonly intimate relation between uncle and sister's son.[185] The uterine uncle supervizes the education of his nephews, who sometimes bear his name and after his death occupy his position. Both the older *Edda* and the *Nibelungenlied* consider it the worst crime against a child to slay his maternal uncle.[186] According to Bachofen, the story of the Nibelungs shows plainly a transition from the old uterine relationship to the one based upon the claims of marriage; the peculiar position in which the uncle stands with regard to his sister's son is of course dependent upon the close tie between brother and sister.[187] In the *Edda* we find Gudrun avenging her brother, who has been killed by her husband; Chriemhild, too, takes sides with her brother, while in the later *Nibelungenlied* the struggle in Chriemhild's soul, the combat between her love for her brothers and that for her husband, culminates in her instigating the murder of the former, who have killed her husband Gunther. The story of *Ortnit's Brautfahrt*, which is rather late, has many ancient characteristics, showing, as Dargun says, that popular views and customs last

184 *Sohrab and Rustem, passim;* also Appendix C.
185 L. Dargun, *Mutterrecht und Raubehe*, p. 54 ff.
186 M. Kovalevsky, *Origines de la Famille*, p. 33.
187 J. J. Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe*, I, 170 ff.

much longer than the practises prescribed by law, and that their most trivial features sometimes pervade later literature.[138]

Bachofen devotes many chapters of his *Antiquarische Briefe* to a study of the uncle and sister's son relations in Greek and Latin mythology; the uncle takes the place of the father, and we find a triangular family consisting of mother, son, and mother's brother. Dr. Potter has pointed out that the epic theme of a combat between father and son and the intimacy of uncle and nephew frequently go hand in hand in these early myths: the son is brought up by the maternal uncle (the mother having been deserted by the father, who has had only temporary relations with her), and on setting out into the world he comes across his father, with whom he fights. Bachofen points out that this family relation rests upon an actually existing state of society, and that its appearance in legendary literature is not an invention of the fancy. In the *Mahabharata,* the story of Astika brings out the importance of the maternal uncle as guardian and educator of the child.[139] In the Daedalus myth of ancient Greece, the most important phase is the continuation of the family through the sister; this feature rests upon an ancient order which the later Greeks had forgotten, but the tradition of which they piously kept up.[140] He gives parallels to this, taken from the *Vishnu Purana,* the story of Brikaspati, the story of Narada, the story of Krishna's birth. The popular traditions of the Maori all rest upon the sacredness of the tie between uncle and nephew, just as the Indian and some of the Greek myths do.[141] The important feature of these epic legends is that they show the predominance of the avunculate as a sentimental survival after its legal rights have disappeared; the Indian myths in particular show the struggle between the declining maternal and the rising paternal authority, ending of course in the complete vic-

[138] *Mutterrecht und Raubehe,* p. 56.
[139] Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe,* I, 57.
[140] *Antiquarische Briefe,* I, 118.
[141] *Antiquarische Briefe,* I, 204.

tory of father-right. The French epic exhibits the same unconscious struggle, as we have seen, in which the secure position of the father as head of the family is still not able to impair the sentimental value of the maternal uncle. The old Irish legends, too, show the same predominance of the maternal uncle, particularly as the foster-parent of the nephew; Cuchulain, for example, is the sister's son of Conchobar, and is under his protection.[142] Thus it is evident from these few *preuves à l'appui* that other literatures add to the testimony of the French epic.

In Italian literature the relationship is not made strikingly apparent; the adaptations even of the French *Chansons de Geste* make much less of uncle and nephew than do the originals, and when the relationship is indicated at all, it is entirely subordinated to the narrative, whereas in the French epic the story is often sacrificed to the sentiment. And yet the influence of the old tradition is felt at times; although in the Italian version of the *Narbonnais* the relationship itself is of far less importance—or at least, if he had it in mind, Andrea da Barberino did not continually harp upon the fact as did the French poets—the rôle of the nephew is such that at times he is the leading character. For instance, the loyalty and devotion of Bertrand to his uncle Guillaume forms so stout a thread running all through the *Nerbonesi* that Bertrand rather than Guillaume appears the hero. At the festivities in connection with the Coronation of Louis, Bertrand distinguishes himself at a tournament by combatting and overpowering several of his uncles.[143] In the story of the siege of Orange, Bertrand escapes from the city, where Guillaume has been besieged for seven years, and goes in search of aid. Applying to his father, he is refused, and in his anger he soundly reprimands Bernart in a tirade magnificently worded:

"O ingrato, e dimentico, non mi chiamare figliuolo, ch'io non t'appello mai più per padre, chè doveresti essere da tutti i

[142] Eleanor Hull, *The Cuchullin Saga*, p. 18.

[143] *Nerbonesi*, I, 361 ff.

cristiani perseverato insino alla morte, e per tutto il mondo cacciato! Io non sono sì fanciullo, come io era quando mi desti la guanciata a Parigi, che se non fussi la vergogna, e 'l peccato, io ti farei provare se la mia ispada taglia. O ingrato, non ti raccorda quando fusti cacciato di Busbante d'Arrighetto, e Guglielmo ti riscosse, e dietti la signoria? Pure quale signoria acquistati tu mai? Or non ti fece Guglielmo signore? Sappi ch'egli è molto da più di te Ghibellino, il quale si proferse sè medesimo in avere, e in persona aiutare la colonna del sangue nerbonese; la quale colonna, s' ella perirà, che vale il nostro nome de' Nerbonesi? Morto Guglielmo, tutti morti siamo. Ora ti rimani, ch'io ti giuro per la fè, la quale io giurai a Guglielmo, e a dama Tiborga, e per la fè, ch'io giurai a re Aluigi, che se Guglielmo iscampa di tanta fortuna, e tu non sia nelle battaglie in suo aiuto, che noi non ti lascieremo tanto di terra che tu possi avere sepoltura![144]

Continuing his march, he kills a man who opposes the expedition which King Louis proposes for the relief of Guillaume.[145] These episodes are from a French source—for example, in the *Enfances Vivien,* Louis suggests such an expedition—so that we can see here the failure of the Italian mind to grasp the whole significance of the quality of nephew, while at the same time realizing the dramatic possibilities of the relations between him and the uncle. It is to be doubted that a tirade like the above could be found in the French epic, on the same theme, that is, without the word 'uncle' being once used![146]

In Spanish literature we find two noteworthy additions to our illustrations; in the story of the *Siete Infantes de Lara,* it is the maternal uncle who kills the seven children, and this relationship makes his crime appear all the more horrible; in the early *cantares,* Bernaldo del Carpio was a sister's son of Charlemagne, and in the working over of the legend becomes of the same

[144] *Nerbonesi,* I, pp. 452–3.

[145] *Nerbonesi,* I, pp. 459–469.

[146] These are at least the impressions produced by a rapid reading of the *Reali di Francia* and the *Nerbonesi,* to which it was not feasible to devote the care used in searching the French originals.

degree of kinship to Alfonso II.[147] Gaston Paris says of him: "On avait évidemment voulu donner un pendant à Roland."[148] While this explanation may suffice in this one instance, it is only superficially satisfactory in general, as applied by Gaston Paris and Léon Gautier to the heroes of the French epic, whose characteristics coincide so intimately with those of other literatures antedating the French that the question becomes broader as we go further into the origins. Since the phenomenon, if it indeed be one, of the sister's son is not found in the other Romance languages to the extent that it is in French, it is evident that a Latin origin must be discarded, despite the parallels which Bachofen discovered in the early Italic myths. Its prevalence in the Germanic legends indicates a very close connection with the French, and the tradition of nephew-right must have come into the French from Germanic sources; this testimony would serve to corroborate Professor Pio Rajna's theory of a Germanic origin of the *Chansons de Geste*, but on the other hand, Professor Bédier's recent theory of a clerical or monastic origin along the mediaeval pilgrimage routes is so plausibly stated that it seems advisable not to formulate an unequivocal opinion until the appearance of the final volume of the *Légendes Epiques*, in which we are promised the key to the situation.

[147] Gröber's *Grundriss*, II, 2, p. 392.

[148] *Histoire Poétique*, p. 205 ff.

CHAPTER V

The Prevalence of Mother-Right

Just how far back it is necessary to go to find the nephew and uncle relation prominent in real life is not easily decided; it is likely that certain elements of it remained even in the Merovingian period, since we find that it occurs in one form or another in many of the chronicles of that time. The history of the Merovingian kings, as related by Gregory of Tours, affords many instances of close relations between uncle and nephew in connection with hostility on the part of the father, as well as instances where the dealings were of a sinister kind. The importance attached to this relationship was remarked by Montesquieu, who seems to have been the first writer to trace the situation back to an observation of Tacitus about the ancient Germans, and to him this affection for the nephew seems peculiar. He comments:

"Je trouve les semences de ces bizarreries dans Tacite. Les enfants des sœurs, dit-il, sont chéris de leur oncle comme de leur propre père. Il y a des gens qui regardent ce lien comme plus étroit et même plus saint, ils le préfèrent quand ils reçoivent des ôtages. C'est pour cela que nos premiers historiens nous parlent tant de l'amour des rois francs pour leur sœur et pour les enfants de leur sœur. Que si les enfants des sœurs étoient regardés dans la maison comme les enfants mêmes, il étoit naturel que les enfants regardassent leur tante comme leur propre mère." [149]

The ancient chroniclers were interested in relating only what appeared to them striking or unusual, so that the common occurrences of life escape them entirely; thus the details of alliances between uncle and nephew, so frequent, are given without com-

[149] Montesquieu, *Esprit des Lois*, Livre XVIII, Chap. XXII, p. 328 (edition of 1820).

ment, presumably because they seemed to the historians very natural, in connection with discord and ill treatment on the part of the father. Among the stories which bring out the same closeness of relations that appears in the epic is that of the affection of Grégoire, Bishop of Langres, for his nephew Attala, and his attempts to rescue him from the misery he was enduring as hostage in the hands of Clovis.[150] Family affection receives so little attention from the historians of those tumultuous times that the recording of it is noteworthy. Childebert and Clotaire at first unite against their nephew Théodebert, but are appeased with presents, and Childebert finally sends for him, saying: "Je n'ai pas de fils, je désire te traiter comme si tu étais le mien."[151] The conspiracy of Chramne, son of Clotaire, against his father, in which he is joined by his uncle Childebert, does not arouse any feelings of horror on the part of the historian.[152] When Gontran adopts his nephew Childebert, he says: "S'il me vient des fils, je ne te regarderai pas moins comme un d'entre eux."[153] Childebert later rejects this alliance and combines with his uncle Chilpéric, who makes him his heir.[154] The Bishop of Nantes brings about the election of his nephew as his successor without his having first passed through the necessary clerical degrees.[155] Gondowald is presented to his uncle Childebert by his mother, who says: "Voilà ton neveu, le fils du roi Clotaire; comme son père le hait, prends-le avec toi, car il est de ton sang."[156] In another story, the royal chamberlain, who has been accused of hunting in the royal forest, denies it, and when commanded to submit to the *jugement de Dieu,* offers his nephew to combat in his stead.[157]

[150] Grégoire de Tours, trans. of Guizot, Bk. III, Chap. 15, p. 142.
[151] Bk. III, Chap. 23, p. 154.
[152] Bk. IV, Chap. 16, p. 187.
[153] Bk. V, Chap. 18, p. 269.
[154] Bk. VI, Chap. 3, p. 338.
[155] Bk. VI, Chap. 15, p. 362.
[156] Bk. VI, Chap. 24, p. 370.
[157] Bk. X, Chap. 10, p. 104.

When Waroch, who is leading the Bretons and the Saxons in an attack on Nantes and Rennes, makes peace, he offers his nephew as hostage: "J'aurai soin d'accomplir tout ce qu'ordonnera le roi, et, pour que vous donniez à mes paroles une entière créance, je vous remettrai mon neveu en ôtage." Unfortunately for the nephew, Waroch forgets his promise of peace, and sends his son to attack the army on its retreat to France.[158]

It was perhaps this last illustration that suggested Montesquieu's reference to Tacitus, who says in the *Germania:*

"Sororum filiis idem apud avunculum, qui apud patrem, honor. Quidam sanctiorem arctioremque hunc nexum sanguinis arbitrantur, et in accipiendis obsidibus magis exigunt, tanquam ii et animum firmius et domum latius teneant. Heredes tamen successoresque sui cuique liberi; et nullum testamentum."[159]

Not only have the various editors of Tacitus commented abundantly on this passage, but sociological writers as well consider it of extreme importance, the earlier ones attaching great weight to each statement, the later ones making reservations. Andrew Lang, in commenting on whether the Picts were Aryan or non-Aryan, says: "The account given by Tacitus, also, in the *Germania,* of the important relationship of uncles, and of sister's sons, closely resembles what we are told about the Pictish family system. Yet the Germans, if anybody is, are Aryans. . . . On such delicate points the evidence of Tacitus, whose Germans may have been mixed with more backward races, is not very strong, it may be urged."[160] The words of Tacitus would indicate that the bond was looked upon rather as a sentimental one than in a legal light, so that this was not a period of unmixed Mother-right. The sociologists have shown that this preference for the sister's son, which is one of the main characteristics of the matriarchal state of society, is found only where Mother-right prevails or has once prevailed, so that

[158] Bk. X, Chap. 9, p. 102.
[159] *Germania,* Book XX.
[160] A. Lang, *History of Scotland,* I, 13.

the existence of this peculiar bond between uncle and nephew in itself indicates that the Germans in the time of Tacitus were passing through that social state. Lippert sums up the situation neatly:

"An den Resten des Neffenrechtes erkennen wir in unertrüglicher Weise, dass auch Germanen und Sklaven nicht allzulange vor ihrer Berührung mit dem klassischen Kulturkreise ihren Organisationen noch auf dem Boden des Mutterrechts gestanden haben müssen—ganz in Uebereinstimmung mit dem, was uns die Alten über Skythen und Sarmaten melden."[161]

Although the development of a legal system had outstripped Mother-right, unmistakable traces of the latter remained in the minds and customs of the people, as the statement of Tacitus shows, so that it seems to be clear that the bond among the ancient Germans was a sentimental one, not supported by the laws.[162] The mutual obligation of vengeance, the uncle as educator or guardian or administrator, his provision of a wife for the sister's son, his protection, the continuation of his name or his office by the nephew, the allusions in legends to the fact that "jemand sei dieses oder jenes Mannes Schwestersohn gewesen,"—all these points are in close connection with the situation as portrayed in the French *Chansons de Geste,* and are supported by Dargun by quotations from the *Scripta Historica Islandica* and from Gregory of Tours' *Historia Francorum.* The general practise of fosterage, particularly on the part of the mother's brother, has also been pointed out by Weinhold.[163] Yet, if such is practically the situation in the oldest *Chansons de Geste,* how much more frankly matriarchal must it have been in the time of Tacitus; Dargun seemingly does not give sufficient weight to the length of the intervening period. Dargun's attempt to strengthen the legal aspect of the problem is not very convincing, in that the develop-

[161] J. Lippert, *Kulturgeschichte der Menschheit,* II, 56.

[162] Dargun, *Mutterrecht und Raubehe,* pp. 21, 56 ff.

[163] K. Weinhold, *Die Deutschen Frauen in dem Mittelalter,* I, 105; *Altnordisches Leben,* p. 285.

ment of the Salian and Ripuarian, as well as the independent Thuringian, laws shows the original inclusion of the mother's family alone, with the gradual inclusion of the father's family, in the matter of inheritance.[164] As a matter of fact, the Germans before the scission must have passed that stage. A recent writer on the subject remarks that "la législation franque avait cette supériorité sur le droit romain de ne pas connaître cette distinction des agnats ou parents par les mâles et des cognats ou parents par les femmes."[165] Starcke and Schrader, too, take exception to Dargun's views, thinking he goes too far. Starcke's statement is clear and satisfactory when he says that: "Ce sont les liens de la sympathie et non ceux du droit qui rattachent l'enfant à la mère, mais nous ne sortons pas pour cela de la famille patriarchale."[166] Thus it is clear why Tacitus reports the close connection of the sister's son as a sentimental tie, while in the legal question of inheritance the own son comes first. Yet we cannot deny that at an earlier period matriarchy must have prevailed among the Germanic tribes. Schrader's evidence is wholly linguistic: in Indogermanic stems a name for the paternal uncle was first used, which was then applied to both uncles, while at a much later period a special name was found for the maternal uncle. As the family became more stable, the cognates assumed more importance, and the mother's brother had naturally the most responsible position in the family. Schrader admits however that probably the pre-Indogermanic tribes of Europe had in part the custom of inheritance from mother's brother to sister's son.[167] If it is true that there was originally no name for the mother's brother, his explanation is unconvincing, and his attempt to push farther back the period of Matriarchy is hardly successful. As Andrew Lang says in his article on

[164] *Mutterrecht und Raubehe*, p. 62 ff.

[165] C. Galy, *La Famille à l'Epoque Mérovingienne*, p. 138.

[166] C. N. Starcke, *La Famille Primitive*, p. 111.

[167] Schrader, *Prehistoric Antiquities*, p. 369 ff.; *Reallexikon*, articles *Familie, Oheim, Mutterrecht*.

'Family' in the new *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the controversy is still alive; a reasonable hypothesis seems to be that the Germanic tribes must all have passed through a period of Matriarchy at some time, as its spread was clearly very general, and that the change into the patriarchal family was so gradual a process that we cannot yet determine how far it had progressed at a given period; since, however, the vestiges in the legends are so distinct, it seems likely that the family organization at the time of Tacitus must have been even more decisively matriarchal than he thought.

Caesar does not appear to have observed the custom of preferring or fostering the nephew among the Gauls; he does, however, comment upon the aloofness of the father, who does not permit his sons to approach him openly until they have reached the age of manhood.[168] In Livy there is perhaps a trace of the practise: Ambigatus, King of the Bituriges, we are told sent a large surplus of his tribe away to Italy to found colonies, under the leadership of his sister's sons, Bellovesus and Segovesus.[169] It is of some importance perhaps that the fact of their being sister's sons of the King was sufficiently current to have passed into the account of Livy.

The evidence is more conclusive in other sections of Europe as to the continuation of the matriarchate or its remains. Among the Picts, down to the ninth century, the sister's son inherits the power, after the brothers of the Pictish ruler; after him and his brothers a sister's son again follows, and so on; it is said that the King was not allowed to marry, and that this method of bequeathing power was the cause of their finding marriage unnecessary.[170]

Celtic history shows many traces of Mother-right, or rather of Nephew-right. The father's lack of importance in a sentimental way is shown by the general practise of having sons

[168] Gallic War, Book VI, Chap. 18, 19.

[169] Livy, Book V, Chap. 34.

[170] Schrader's *Reallexikon*, article *Mutterrecht;* also stated by Andrew Lang, *History of Scotland*, I, 5, 28.

brought up out of the paternal house; thus fosterage becomes the closest of all ties among the Celts.[171] When the sister's son or the maternal uncle was killed, the duty of vengeance devolved upon the other, according to the Ancient Laws of Ireland.[172] According to the old law of northern Wales, the son of a woman by a stranger from across the sea could inherit from maternal relatives, although contrary to the usual practise, because it was felt that the stranger brought new strength into the family, and that the nephew would thus become the successor of the grandfather. These facts are explained by D'Arbois de Jubainville as the natural influence of daughter upon father, sister upon brother, niece upon uncle.[173] The father, however, had the power of life and death over the sons, as in ancient Gaul.[174] The Welsh law states, with regard to the inheritance of land, that if the eldest son be dumb or deaf or an idiot, "the next in age has it, unless there be a brother's son, or a son to a nephew the son of a brother, or a male of equal right."[175] Thus we find the right of succession in Celtic Britain, but aside from that, nephew-right seems to have been in Germany, France, and Ireland, more a matter of sentiment than of legal provision. But what we know of ancient laws and customs in other parts of the world, together with travellers' reports from the most remote periods down to our own times, combines to emphasize the rights of the nephew both legally and sentimentally.

Strobaeus relates that the Ethiopian kings left their power not to their own but to their sister's children.[176] Herodotus, Strabo, and Nicholas of Damascus all give the same testi-

[171] R. Dareste, *Etudes d'Histoire de Droit*, p. 361; P. W. Joyce, *Social History of Ancient Ireland*, II, 17.

[172] H. D'Arbois de Jubainville, *Cours de Littérature Celtique*, VII, 187.

[173] *La Famille Celtique*, pp. 69, 71.

[174] G. Dottin, *Manuel de l'Antiquité Celte*, p. 143.

[175] *Laws of Wales*, ed. of Aneurin Owen, 1841, pp. 739–740.

[176] Cited by Bachofen, *Das Mutterrecht*, p. 12.

mony.[177] Plutarch says that the Roman matrons prayed to the mother-god Ino-Matula to bless, not their sons, but their sister's sons.[178] The notion of the relative closeness of the tie between mother and children and father and children is seen in the Athenian legislation, which forbade marriage between children of the same mother, while permitting it between children of the same father.[179] The Brahmin codes called Vishnu and Narada recognized the rights of the grand-father and the maternal uncle as guardians; it was allowable to adopt the brother's sons, but not those of the sisters, because the latter were considered an integral part of the family without adoption.[180] According to Pistorius, the eldest maternal brother was the head of the Malay family, acting as the real father of the sister's children, while his possessions went to his own family, and never to his wife's family.[181] The Bolognese traveller of the fifteenth century, Varthema, reports that the kings of Calicut appointed the sister's son as heir to the throne, being sure that they two were of the same blood, while owing to the practise of defloration of brides by the Brahmin priests, paternity was always uncertain.[182] Gubernatis relates that for the same reason the second son, or preferably the sister's son, became heir among the Nairs of Malabar in the period from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries at any rate; Barbosa reports the same thing.[183]

The same stories are reported by modern travellers from all parts of the world, showing that mother-right is even now fairly wide-spread among uncivilized tribes; the details vary, in some places the uncle and nephew relationship assuming more prom-

[177] Cf. Kovalevsky, *Tableau des Origines*, p. 19; A. Giraud-Teulon, *Origines de la Famille*, pp. 32, 263, with cross-references to Herodotus, III, 29, and Strabo, XVII, 822.

[178] Cited by Bachofen, *Das Mutterrecht*, p. 12.

[179] Kovalevsky, *Tableau des Origines*, p. 36.

[180] Kovalevsky, p. 37.

[181] Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe*, I, 55.

[182] K. Schmidt, *Jus Primae Noctis*, p. 32.

[183] *Jus Primae Noctis*, p. 34.

inence in the blood feud, in other regions in the matter of inheritance, and so on. These accounts are reliable, although the state of society they represent only helps us to determine approximately the characteristics of the primitive family. "The beliefs and customs of civilized peoples contain many survivals of beliefs and practises that still exist in full force in savage communities."[184] So it is worth while to collate some examples of nephew-right among primitive peoples of modern times which have a connection with those forms of matriarchy to be found in the French epic. Many of the details characterizing mother-right in its various phases find no place in its survival in the *Chansons de Geste*, such as the *jus primae noctis*, defloration as a privilege, the *couvade*, exogamy, although there is perhaps a trace of the last. Generally speaking, mother-right appears in the French epic in the form of nephew-right.

In India, among the Nairs of Malabar at the present time, the sister's children grow up with the uncle and are his heirs, while he is a stranger to his own children, for the reason that the man and woman after marriage continue to live each in his own family.[185] Inheritance nowadays is always in the maternal line, property descending first to the sister, then to the sister's son, etc.[186] Among the Hindus the nephew is frequently adopted by the uncle, seemingly in order to reconcile the ancient uterine system with that of direct inheritance, so that now in the Tanjaour the nephew inherits the royal power not as the sister's son, but as the son of his uncle.[187]

In Arabia at the present day the relations between a man and his maternal uncle are particularly close and tender;[188] there is, too, a popular belief that in inheriting the property of his

[184] F. H. Giddings, *Principles of Sociology*, p. 209; cf. also p. 264.

[185] Giraud-Teulon, p. 41.

[186] Schmidt, p. 35.

[187] Giraud-Teulon, p. 204, note.

[188] Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, p. 187.

uncle, he also inherits the latter's character.[189] In a note to his translation of the *Arabian Nights*, Burton writes that: "The Arabs also hold that as a girl resembles her mother, so a boy follows his uncle (mother's brother)"; the translator adds that he himself has often seen this resemblance.[190]

In Ethiopia and Egypt the order of succession through the uterine nephew, as pointed out by Herodotus and Strabo and by the Arab writer Abou-Selah, is still observed by the greater part of the African negroes.[191] Abou-Selah states that kinship among the Nubians descends to the sister's son, and that they trace descent in the female line, alleging that the maternal nephew is irrevocably of the family.[192] In the valley of the Nile, until recently, the ancestors of the Biskra tribe reckoned genealogy in the female line, and property descended in the same way.[193] In the Messoufah tribe, which follows the teachings of the Koran, children are named after the maternal uncle instead of the father, and inherit from him.[194]

In China, the brother's sons are still called 'my sons,' the sister's sons 'my nephews.'[195] In his *Systems of Consanguinity*, Morgan shows in a long chapter on the topic that the Chinese do not consider the two sets of nephews to be related to the uncle in the same degree.

In Thibet, a family of brothers living together will have one wife among them, but the eldest brother is the natural head of the family and the nurturer of the children.[196] It is said that the Shiva of Durdistan have no other name for uncle and nephew than 'father,' 'son.'[197]

189 Potter, *Sohrab and Rustem*, p. 123.

190 Burton's *Arabian Nights*, I, 303, note 1.

191 Giraud-Teulon, p. 32; cf. Quatremère, *Mémoires Géographiques sur l'Egypte.*

192 Kovalevsky, p. 17.

193 Giraud-Teulon, p. 25.

194 Giraud-Teulon, p. 32, note.

195 Giraud-Teulon, p. 117, after Morgan.

196 Robertson Smith, p. 146.

197 Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe*, II, 152 ff.

In the region of the Caucasus, among the Pshaves, a mountain tribe of Georgia, the mother's brother acts instead of the father in the blood-feud, avenging the nephew's death, or receiving the composition.[198] The Ingousch have a custom which is derived from an ancient mode of inheritance: the nephew, at the age of puberty, invariably demands and receives from his maternal uncle the gift of a horse.[199] The Chevsours, another tribe of the Caucasus, admit of no other person than the maternal uncle as the guardian of an orphan.[200] Among the Kalmucks there exists great abuse of the nephew-right for purposes of gain or for political influence, and the name 'nephew' is generally synonymous with 'spendthrift.'[201]

In Russia, states Kovalevsky, "this close tie between brother and sister, between the uncle and the sister's children, still exists among the southern Slavs."[202] He explains the historical development of the situation as follows:

"According to the old Russian law, the tie which unites a man to his sister and the children she has brought into the world, was considered to be closer than that which unites two brothers or the [paternal] uncle and his nephew. In a society organized on the principle of agnatism, the son of a sister has no reason to interfere in the pursuit of the murderer of his uncle. The brother belongs altogether to another clan, and the duty of vengeance falls exclusively on the persons of that clan. But such is by no means the point of view of the old Russian law, recognizing, as it does, the right of the sister's son to avenge the death of his uncle. 'In case a man shall be killed by a man,' decrees the first article of the Pravda of Yaroslav (the *lex barb[ar]orum* of the Russians), 'vengeance may be taken by a son, in case his father has been killed; by the father, when the son falls a victim; by the brother's son and by the son of a sister.' The last words are omitted in the later version of the Pravda, a fact which shows the increase of agnatic organisation, but they are found in the version generally recognized as the most ancient."

198 Kovalevsky, p. 21.

199 Kovalevsky, p. 22.

200 Kovalevsky, p. 24.

201 Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe*, II, 91.

202 M. Kovalevsky, *Modern Customs and Ancient Laws*, p. 18.

The mass of similar testimony from African tribes is immense. Among the Berbers, the eldest son of the eldest sister inherits the office of Sheik.[203] In the Touareg tribes there are several interesting practises: property acquired by individual work descends to the sons, but that acquired collectively by the family goes to the eldest son of the eldest sister.[204] The Touaregs of the Messoufah trace their genealogy through the mother's brother, as do the Arabs, who also give the child his uncle's name, rather than that of his father.[205] Among the African Barea and Kunáma the nephew and the maternal uncle perform vengeance one for the other, while neither father nor son ever takes up the blood-feud the one for the other.[206] Among the Barea and the Bazes the own childern never inherit property, but it descends first to the brother by the same mother, then to the eldest son of the eldest sister.[207] The family system of the Barea and the Bayas rests wholly upon maternal kinship, says Kovalevsky.[208] All along the Guinea coast and in some interior tribes, the Barea, Bazes, Vouamrima, Kimbundas, Bassoutos, the mother's brother owns the children outright and has extraordinary power over them.[209] Among the Bassoutos in particular this excessive preponderance of the maternal uncle is found, and the children of polygamous families have no especial dealings with their father.[210] Among the Ashango, the brother inherits property and rank; in default of a brother, the eldest son of the eldest sister.[211] Among the

[203] G. Bonnet Maury, "La Femme Musulmane dans l'Afrique Septentrionale Française," *Revue Bleue*, 3 février, 1906, p. 135.

[204] Giraud-Teulon, p. 168.

[205] Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe*, II, 152.

[206] Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, article *Blood-feud*, signed by L. H. Gray.

[207] Giraud-Teulon, p. 34.

[208] *Tableau des Origines*, p. 18.

[209] Giraud-Teulon, p. 162.

[210] E. Westermarck, *Human Marriage*, p. 108.

[211] Starcke, *La Famille Primitive*, p. 68.

Fantis, the eldest sister's son succeeds to property and rank.[212] In some tribes of Madagascar the sister's son inherits property, political office, and sometimes priestly functions.[213] Among the Baronga close relations prevail between maternal uncle and nephew, and the latter has numerous claims and rights, even to that of inheriting his uncle's widows.[214]

In Polynesia the evidence of present Matriarchy is equally striking; the Malays have passed through this stage of development within historical times.[215] The Malay family of today consists of the mother and her children—the father is an outsider.[216] Spencer points out kinship through the females among the higher Tahitians, and states that "among the Tongas nobility has always descended by the female line."[217] In the Fiji Islands the nephew has a remarkable part: in some regions he has the right to appropriate to his own use as much of the uncle's property as he may desire, but this power is given only to those whose uncle has lands or subjects.[218] In Sumatra the succession to the chieftainship goes to the sister's son, as does property in general.[219]

In South America we are told that nephews formerly inherited in Peru, except in the case of the Incas.[220]

In North America the same practise is found in some of the Russian possessions in the Pacific, as well as among various tribes of Indians.[221] The family is sometimes continued through the women, the father not passing as a relative, so that the nephew is more cherished than the son.[222] Among the

212 Potter, *Sohrab and Rustem*, p. 128.
213 Giraud-Teulon, p. 34.
214 Hartland, *Primitive Paternity*, II, 208.
215 Dargun, p. 17.
216 Westermarck, p. 39.
217 Spencer, *Sociology*, I, 698.
218 Starcke, p. 91 ff.; Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe*, II, 97 ff.
219 Spencer, I, 699; Giraud-Teulon, p. 36.
220 Spencer, I, 710; Giraud-Teulon, p. 36; Dargun, p. 20.
221 Giraud-Teulon, p. 36; Giddings, p. 263.
222 Dargun, p. 15, after Lafiteau, *Moeurs des Sauvages Américains*, I, 559.

Iroquois Indians power and property, even to the tomahawk, descended from the chief to the children of his brothers and sisters, and not in his own line.[223] In some of the tribes the Indian regards his brother's son as his own, his sister's son as his nephew, while the woman considers her brother's son her nephew and her sister's son her own; the same nomenclature prevails also in Hawaii.[224] In British Columbia there is a tribe (the Kwakiutl) in which the maternal system has but recently become merged into the paternal.[225]

[223] Cf. Spencer, I, 698; Giraud-Teulon, p. 36, after Charlevoix, V, 395.

[224] Giraud-Teulon, pp. 112, 91; this system of nomenclature, which is fairly common, is best studied in Morgan's *Systems of Consanguinity*.

[225] W. J. Thomas, *Sex and Society*, p. 84, after Professor Boas.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

This glorification of the nephew has been well established by the sociologists as being one of the main features of Matriarchy, and its characteristics as seen in the myths and legends of the ancients and in primitive communities of various parts of the modern world left such distinct traces upon the mediaeval mind that they pervade the literature of the Middle Ages. Its manifestations vary in different societies, the more primitive the state of civilization, the looser the bond between husband and wife and the closer the tie between brother and sister, with the resultant elevation in importance of the sister's children;[226] in a later state of society, as the father's functions and authority became recognized and the family came to consist of father, mother, and children, instead of mother, mother's brother, and children, the paternal uncle assumed a position of equal prominence with the maternal uncle. When the actual legal rights of the uncle die out, we find that traces still remain in customs and legends in the form of a sentimental survival. This is undoubtedly the situation in the French epic. And yet

[226] Cf. the occasional dogma of the epic poet with regard to the affection between brother and sister:

"Li rois i doit Blanceflor corouner,
Vostre seror, ki molt vos doit amer."
(*Aliscans*, ed. Halle, 2548)

N'i ot un seul ki li desist salus,
Nis la roïne, dont assés fu veüs;
Ki ert sa suer, amer le deüst plus.
(*Aliscans*, 2579)

"Ains aiderai Oreble od le vis cler,
Ele est ma suer, si le doi molt amer."
(*Aliscans*, 3818)

it is doubtful whether the poets of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were aware of the importance that nephew-right assumes in their compositions. That such a survival can exist without its being apparent is evinced by the contention of Bachofen that vestiges of mother-right remained in certain Latin beliefs—and yet we find Tacitus expressing surprise at the emotional aspect of the uncle and nephew relations among the Germanic tribes; Bachofen claimed that among the ancient Etruscans the expression *nepos luxuriosus a Tuscis dicitur* indicates the pampered condition of the sister's son, and he adds that: "Rom verwandelte die Schwestersohnsfamilie in die väterliche, den *nepos ex sorore* in den *nepos ex filio vel filia.*" [227] What is certain is that Roman influence affected the ancient supremacy of the mother's relatives as seen in the Germanic tribes to the extent that nothing remained of it in the Carolingian period except the tradition. The Salian laws show how early it died out. The Merovingian chronicles show traces of it in its sentimental aspect, while literature proper keeps it up and makes much of it until a late period.

The early theories of Lubbock and von Hellwald that the cause of such predominance of the sister's son in primitive communities was uncertainty of paternity due to early communism in women, and that of Bachofen that it was owing to general promiscuity in a primitive condition of society, have been displaced by that of Westermarck, who shows conclusively that it was the inevitable result of the practise of Exogamy. And Exogamy, according to the latest writers on the subject, is the natural outcome of Totemism. Uncertainty of paternity, although in some communities an important factor, has in general far less effect than ignorance of the principles of paternity; Hartland has shown that the latter was one of the main reasons for early Matriarchy. Since motherhood is in any state of society the strongest of all ties, little wonder that the mother's clan assumed such importance in the life of the children, when Exogamy was so generally rendered necessary on ac-

[227] Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe*, II, 113.

count of the strict laws of Totemism. In primitive tribes of today members of the same totem are forbidden to intermarry, the children are of the same clan as the mother, and thus the practise of tracing descent through the mother's totem is a natural outgrowth of marriage outside the clan. It is not surprising to find a hint of this practise of marrying outside the clan surviving in mediaeval literature; nearly every one of the French epics has one or more examples of a French hero marrying by elopement or by consent a Saracen maid, and the custom in poetry at least is so common that it may be considered an additional manifestation of matriarchal principles. Other peculiarities of the epic show that nephew-right, although the most important, was not the only phase of primitive society which persisted in a literary form. The numerous allusions to the conception of a son during the first night of union suggests many of the ancient folk-tales related by Potter, in which a couple meet by chance and separate the next day, the woman being left *enceinte* with a son who later seeks his father; this theme is found in the Arthurian cycle as well. The custom of *Gastfreundschaft,* so common still in many primitive tribes, brings about the same result.[228] The many allusions, particularly in the Aymeri legends, to the family-whole, the *lignage,* suggest also the days when the individual was not an entity, but one of a group, a part of a system. The banding together of a vast clan to avenge the common honor was pointed out by Flach as illustrative of feudal solidarity; in the epic this is noticeable particularly in the *Girart de Vienne,* where the whole family take up arms to avenge the dishonor imposed upon Girart by the Queen; in the *Renaut,* where a numerous kin surrounds the four sons of Aymon; in

[228] Cf. the episode of Lutisse in *Anseïs de Cartage,* the origin of Bauduinet, son of Ogier, the episode of Guischart and Fausete in *Foucon,* the narrative of the diversions of Garin, Bérart and Robastre in the castle of Beaufort in *Garin de Montglane,* and the prediction of Elioxe to her husband in the *Naissance du Chevalier au Cygne.*

the banding together of the traitors in the various parts of the *geste* devoted to them; and even at the close of the *Roland*, where all of Ganelon's relatives take up his defence.[229] So that on the whole, the nephew-manifestation is but one, albeit the most important, of several ways in which the epic connects itself with prehistoric society.

It is impossible to decide how much is a matter of tradition in the *Chansons de Geste*, and how much represents the life and thought of the periods in which they were composed. The belief of Léon Gautier and others that the poems are an exact picture of their times is not borne out by the present examination of the reciprocal attitude of uncle and nephew.[230] Unless corroborated by documents which by their nature imply the use of less imagination than do the epic poems, it is not possible to assign a definite period to the decline of the maternal uncle. Although Roman influence impaired the ancient importance of the mother's relatives in the Germanic tribes, still that importance remained long enough to color both the German and the Carolingian epic; that the fusion of paternal with maternal relatives was complete as early as the sixth century is brought out in Dargun's discussion of the Salian and the Ripuarian laws.[231] On the other hand, the authority of the father is disregarded in the French epic, and we find a striking conflict of two forces, in which the survival of traditional relations seems to predominate throughout the period of epic bloom over the actual state of family life; and yet we are told that in actual life through the feudal period the relations between father and son were based rather upon allegiance than upon kinship or any tie of affection: "Généralement les barons du moyen âge ne témoignaient pas grande affection à leurs enfants en bas âge, et le jeune garçon restait jusqu'à six ou huit ans entre les mains de sa mère et des femmes du château."[232] If

[229] Cf. J. Flach, *Origines de l'Ancienne France*, II, 446 ff.

[230] Cf. C. V. Langlois, La Société Française d'après dix Romans, p. iv.

[231] *Mutterrecht und Raubehe*, p. 62 ff.

[232] Ch. de la Pâquerie, *La Vie Féodale*, p. 139.

we may rely upon Tacitus, as far back as his time the legal status of the son as heir was fixed upon the Germanic tribes, yet the sentimental position of the sister's son was much the same as described in our epics. This germ of prehistoric tradition persisted far into the period of transition. The Merovingian chronicles certainly do not record such striking instances of nephew-right as do the popular branches of literature; the insular Celtic chronicles however show its actual existence in a much later period; the introduction of Christianity and of Roman influence among the tribes of the north must have been the most important factors in the transition to paternal authority. The life of the epic, then, was mainly in the past, in that remote period when the sister's son had a status different from that of the brother's son, but the period of composition was one of transition, when the two nephews were being merged into the same degree of relationship.

The manifestations of nephew-right in the *Chansons de Geste* consist largely of sentimental themes, but of the active phases that of the blood-feud assumes the greatest weight, together with the constant association of uncle and nephew in war. These two features are to be expected, considering the consistently martial character of the narrative. Fosterage and inheritance receive far less attention at the hands of the poet. Among those peoples however where Matriarchy still holds sway, or has recently done so, fosterage and inheritance—in other words, the legal rights of uncle over nephew and the claims of the latter—are the very foundation of the system; the other features are but details. The term 'Matriarchy' is of course in itself a misnomer, for the degraded position of women is well-known among primitive tribes where mother-right prevails, while the inferior position of the mediaeval woman is equally apparent, yet in the continuation of the family both have a part which vastly exceeds that of the father. In fact in our mediaeval epic the father is himself of so slight importance that the heroes are frequently not distinguished by a patronymic as in the Greek epic, but rather by the name of

their son, as *Milon, qui fut père de Roland; Gauffrey, qui engendra Ogier,* etc.; "le fils étant devenu célèbre avant le père, l'illustration, au lieu de descendre, remontait."[233] The main principle of mother-right is the matrilinear tracing of descent; we find vestiges of this in the French epic in the constantly recurring reminders of kinship to the maternal uncle. What the poet had *in petto* we cannot tell, but the direction which the nephew as an epic character follows implies a certain remoteness from the fundamental reasons for the matriarchal system; the tendency to dwell longer upon the more romantic aspects of solidarity and mutual affection indicates a sub-conscious recognition of the basic element of primitive relationship. The direction which nephew-right takes in the French epic would tend to strengthen the theory of a popular origin; the close resemblance in many features to Germanic legends indicates the point of contact, the direct source, while the many phases which are found in all popular literatures show a remote common origin. The foundation of family life as seen in the epic is nephew-right; this is plainly the most ancient part of the poems, and the inference is that all else was of gradual growth, the stories developing and expanding, while the primitive core remains until the period when paternity became actually of such authority that the mediaeval mind could no longer appreciate the glorification of the relations between maternal uncle and nephew, and the theme dropped out of literature. Each legend, then, would be the heritage of remote antiquity, an edifice which was the work of many hands so unceasingly engaged in extending it that even after many generations have been engaged upon it no jointure is discoverable, and the whole is the assimilation of more periods than one could tell.

[233] E. Pey, Preface to *Doon de Mayence,* p. iv, note.

APPENDIX *A*

Formulas of Identification of the Sister's Son

(*A few examples collected to show the conventional terms employed by the poets*)

1. *Roland.*

Et li rois Guis tantost fait mander dame Gile:
Cele ert suer Karlemaine, le roi de Saint Denise,
Et fame Ganelon, qui li cors Dieu maudie,
Et ert mere Rollant a la chiere hardie.
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 1589)

C'est Gile la duchoise, au gent cors onoré,
Qui suer est Karlemaine, le fort roi keroné,
Et fame Ganelon, le compaignon Hardré,
Et est mere Rollant, le chevalier menbré.
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 2920)

"Te donnay famme Bagueheut la gentis:
Ma serour est la belle o le cler vis;
Or en est veusve et Rolend orphelins."
(*Aquin,* 1002)

"Sire," dist li valles, "Rollans m'apele on,
Et fu nés en Bretaigne, tot droit a saint Fagon.
Fix sui vostre seror a la clere façon
Et li buen duc d'Angiers c'on apele Milon."
(*Renaut,* p. 119, 34)

2. *Baudoin.*

"De par moi saluez le maine ampereor;
A Baudoin me dites, *le fil de sa seror,*
Qu'il gart bien sa saignie jusq'au trezisme jor."
(*Saisnes,* CXXIV, 23)

Baudoin apela, *le fil de sa seror* . . .
"Dame," ce dit li rois, "ci a .i. poigneor;

Assez est riches hom, *fis est de ma seror.*"
(*Saisnes,* CCV, 12, 16)

3. *Gui de Bourgogne.*

" Vés Sanson de Borgoigne, qui gentils est et ber,
S'a la serour Karlon, le fort roi coroné,
Et si en a li dus .i. vallet angendré."
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 216)
" Sanses," dist l'emperere, " par la vertu du ciel,
Je quit c'est vostre fis et de vostre moillier;
Maris estes ma suer, je quit qu'il est mes niés."
(*Gui de Bourgogne,* 3166)
Et Guion de Bourgoigne a a lui apelle:
Fils ert de sa seror et de sa parente:
" Cosins, vous en irres socoure la cite."
(*Destruction de Rome,* 1179)

4. *Anseïs de Carthage.*

Ripeus fu le septiesme, qui moult ot de renon,
Qui fu pere *Anseïs, fix de la suer Kallon.*
(*Gaufrey,* 100)

5. *Nephews of Guillaume.*

" Viuien sire ia es tu de icel lin
En grant bataille nus deis ben maintenir
Ia fustes fiz Boeue cornebut al marchis
Nez de la fille al bon cunte Aimeris
Nefs Willame al curbnies le marchis
En grant bataille nus deis ben maintenir."
(*Willame,* 295)
Del feu se drecet dunc uns suens niés danz Gui:
Cil fut fiz Bueve Cornebut le marchis,
Nez de la fille al prou cunte Aimeri,
E niés Guillelme al curb nes le marchis,
E frere fut Viviën le hardi.
(*Willame,* ed. Suchier, 1438)
Del altre part fu Rainald de peiter

Vn sun neuov de sa sorur primer.
(*Willame*, 2540)
Li cuens Guillaumes en apela Gautier,
Le Tolosan, einsi l'oï noncier,
Fil de sa suer, un gentill chevalier.
(*Couronnement*, 1646)
Li bers Guillaumes fu molt preus et hardis.
Il en apele et Gerbert et Jerin:
Si neveu furent *et de sa seror fil.*
(*Couronnement*, 1392)

6. *Aiol.*

"Mais il n'i ara certes plus franc de vous,
Car vos estes li niés l'enperreour,
Jel sai bien a fiance, *fiex sa serour.*"
(*Aiol*, 188)
Loeys fu a piet entre ses drus,
Li fieus de sa seror l'ot abatu.
(*Aiol*, 3385)
"Voir on m'apele Aiol: mes peres est Elie;
Niés sui l'enpereor qui Franche a en baillie;
Je suis fieus sa seror la gentil dame Avisse."
(*Aiol*, 5392)
"Mes peres a non Elie a la clere fachon,
Ma mere ert vostre seur, fille le roi Charlon."
(*Aiol*, 8099)
"Rois, je sui nés de France, des vaillans et des mieus,
Et niés l'enpereor, Loeys le guerrier.
Je sui fieus sa seror, dame Avisse al vis fier;
Elie est mes peres, li viellars chevaliers."
(*Aiol*, 10250)

7. *Raoul de Cambrai.*

"Comment poroie esgarder cel glouton
Qi mon neveu ocist en traïson?
Fix ert vo suer, qe de fit le seit on."
(*Raoul*, 4867)

Icil Raous, Seignor, que je vos di,
De la seror fu le roi Loeïz.
(*Mort Garin*, 3694)

8. *Foucon.*

"S'a pris mari outre noz volentez,
Nies Vivïen *et de sa seror nez.*"
(*Foucon*, ed. Schultz-Gora, 4629)
Et cil li conte com li sors fu jete,
Et de Foukon, qui tant est redoutes,
Nies Vivien, *et de sa seror nes.*
(*Foucon*, ms. de Boulogne, fol. 213 r°; the third verse would follow 880 of Schultz-Gora)

9. *Reinier de Termes.*

Enmi la rote a encontré Reinier;
Nez fu de Termes de la seror Gautier . . .
Paranz Guischart, nies Guion, filz Gautier.
(*Foucon*, 3350, 8484)

10. *Joffroi, nephew of Bertrand.*

Joffroi, lo fil Rogier;
Ses parenz iere de la seror Gelier . . .
Joffroiz ot non, si ert nies Ernaÿs.
(*Foucon*, 7443, 9126)

11. *Garin and his brothers, nephews of the King of Lombardy.*

Ce dist Garin: "Oncles, entandez ça!
Vez les anfans q'Aymeris angendra,
Et Hermanjart vostre suer les porta."
(*Narbonnais*, 2091)

12. *Coine.*

Et Charles laise corre le destrier abrivé,
Si ala ferir Coine en son escu listé.
Icil fu niés Girart *et de sa seror né.*
(*Renaut*, p. 33, 35)

13. *Gontier, nephew of Hugon.*

De l'autre part fut danz Guntiers,

Cil qui fut ja sis escuiers,
Fiz sa serur, si ert sis niez.
(*Gormond et Isembard,* 327)

14. *Hernaut.*
"Qui l'a donc mort?" Droés lui respondit,
"Par ma foi, sire, li niés au duc Garin,
Hernaus d'Orliens, qui fu fils Héloï."
(*Garin,* I, 149)

15. *Nephews of Ybert.*
Ybers apela Bernier par amor,
Et en apres *le fil de sa serour,*
Et ces .ij. freres qui sont bon poigneor,
Wedon de Roie, Loeys le menor.
(*Raoul,* 4130)

16. *Gilebert, nephew of Elie.*
"Un neven ai en France qu'est tes parens,
Il est fiex ma seror dame Hersent;
S'a a non Gilebers o le cor gent,
Si guerroie le roi u France apent."
(*Aiol,* 332)

17. *Nephews of Garnier.*
La bataille fu prise et li gage donné.
Ez Girart de Rivier ou descent au degré,
Qui tint Hui et Naumur et Dinant et Ruisé.
Et cil fu niez Garnier *et de sa seror nez.*
(*Aye d'Avignon,* 296)
"Diva! Estes vous freres, qui si vos resenblez?"
Et respont Aulori: "Cosins sommes charnez,
Car nous sommes de freres et de .II. serors nez,
Neveu le duc Garnier de Nentuel la cité."
(*Aye,* 3424)

18. *Nephew of Makaire.*
Uns des neveus Makaire i est alés:
Fieus fu de sa seror, ch'oi conter.
(*Aiol,* 4492)

19. *Nephew of Fromont.*

Et va ferir Morant le fil Barré.
Niés fu Fromont *et de sa seror nés.*
(*Jourdains*, 200)

20. *Buevon, nephew of Milon.*

Il estoit ses cosins *et de sa seror nes.*
(*Parise*, 664)

21. *Nephew of Ganelon.*

.I. damoisel i ot, Hervieu l'apeloit on,
Fix fu de la seror au cuvert Guenelon.
(*Gui de Nanteuil*, 197)

22. *Plantol, nephew of King Lotaire.*

Molt l'ama; ses niés ert, de sa seror joïe.
(*Elioxe*, 1640)

23. *Saracen and foreign nephews.*

A Clariun le roi en est cascuns alés:
Cil ert niés l'amirant *et de sa sereur nés.*
(*Fierabras*, 4064)
.i. mien cousin m'ocist ier au joster,
Sorbrins ot nom, *fix de ma seror ert.*
(*Huon de Bordeaux*, 7883)
Baudamas son neveu isnelement apele;
Fis est de sa seror Odierne la bele.
(*Saisnes*, CIII, 20)
Cuida Caanins fust, *fis de sa seror* Aiglante.
(*Saisnes*, CXXIX, 6)
"Perdu as Escorfan, *le fis de ta serour.*"
(*Floovant*, 595)
A tant es vos Goniot d'Alemengne,
Niés Savari de *sa seror germaine.*
(*Aymeri*, 1775)
Por la bataille vint Brujant li membres
.i. jovenes turs qui molt avoit fiertes
Nies fu le roi Jermont *se sa seror portes.*
(*Enfances Vivien*, 4409)

Un espié portent par moult ruiste fréor,
Dont si ont mort maint gentil vavasor,
Lui et Tacon, *le fil de sa seror.*
(*Aliscans,* ed. Jonckbloet, 39)
N'ot si fort homme jusqu'a la mer betée,
Fors Renoart *fils sa seror, l'ainz née.*
(*Aliscans,* ed. Jonckbloet, 293)
Niés Renoart, *fis sa seror l'ainz née.*
(*Aliscans,* ed. Jonckbloet, 5377)
Cele nuit les conroie Estatins l'esnasés,
Drus fu l'emperéor *et de sa seror nés.*
(*Antioche,* II, 74)
Cel jour prissent li nostre l'amiral des Esclés,
Au tref Huon le Maine la fu emprisonés,
Niés estoit Garsion *et de sa seror nés;*
Sachiés quant le saura moult en iert adolés.
(*Antioche,* IV, 1012)

APPENDIX *B*

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